Hafa Adai!

Today is last day to complete 2021 Prevailing Wage Study. PAGE 2
'*Insular Cases* racist and contrary to the US Constitution' PAGE 6

75¢

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXI, Issue No. 63

www.saipantribune.com | WEDNESDAY MARCH 31, 2021 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune

'Torres authorized to pay child tax credit monthly'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Under the American Rescue Plan, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres is authorized to make monthly payments of the Child Tax Credit, instead of an annual lump-sum payment, according to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) over the weekend.

Torres

In his digital newsletter e-kilili, Sablan said the monthly payments—$250 or $300, de-

See TORRES on Page 4

IPI receivership suspended until...

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The receivership that was ordered by the U.S. District Court for the NMI against the Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC and parent company Imperial Pacific International Holdings Ltd. last March 10 is conditionally suspended until such time

See IPI on Page 4

Rise in fuel prices results in FAC increase

With the increase in the price of fuel follows an increase in the power utility bill of CNMI customers, effective April 1, 2021.

The current Fuel Adjustment Charge rate of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., which is $0.16578 per kilowatt-hour, will increase to

See RISE on Page 4

TINIAN HARBOR REPAIR
Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 4 on Tinian, screed concrete to ensure a level surface for the mooring bollard foundation at the Tinian Harbor. The repair project will enhance the Port of Tinian for future operations. Seabees provide general engineering and civil support to Navy, Marine Corps and joint operational forces globally.

U.S. NAVY PHOTO/PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS WENHAN FAN

Saipan physician demands jury trial

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A Saipan physician who is being accused of excessively prescribing opioids and controlled substances is demanding a jury trial on all issues that are legally triable before a jury, and for the complaint to be dismissed with prejudice.

Dr. John Doyle, through his lawyer, Steven P. Pixley, insists on his innocence, saying all his prescriptions were issued per a bona fide physician-patient relationship.

Pixley said that Doyle is seeking for the complaint to be dismissed with prejudice,

See SAIPAN on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 7pm, March 30, 2021

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,804	1	7,805
Recovered	7,637	0	7,637
Active	33	1	34
Deaths	134	0	134
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			140,463

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	159	0	159
Traced via Travel Screening	123	0	123
Traced via Community Screening	36	0	36
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			26,131*
Days since last community transmission			14

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Saipan:	Tinian:	Rota:
Dose 1: 14,421	Dose 1: 913	Dose 1: 944
Dose 2: 10,584	Dose 2: 517	Dose 2: 735

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

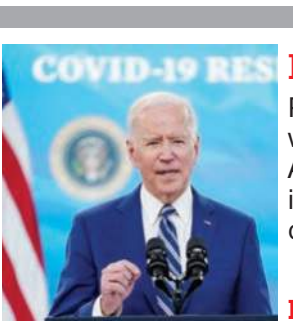
LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Twinkle Kids Land & Café makes sure young ones have fun while parents are having coffee.

PAGE 11



NATION
President Joe Biden warns: Too many Americans are declaring virus victory too quickly.

PAGE 12

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING
One of the big-ticket items when it comes to houses is the bathroom. But why?

PAGE 14

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

ON ISSUE ABOUT FERMIN ATALIG'S OUSTER

Constitutional or not? OAG's opinion sought

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said Friday it's best to obtain the legal advice of Attorney General Edward Manibusan to determine whether he as governor or the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. board of trustees chairperson has the authority to remove Fermin Atalig from the board.

This comes soon after Sen. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota) accused CHCC board of trustees chair Lauri Ogumoro of usurping Torres' authority to appoint or remove board members when she removed Atalig from the board last year. Santos had described Atalig's ouster as "highly questionable," "illegal and unconstitutional."

When asked to comment during his Friday radio news briefing, Torres said it would be better to refrain from making a comment as to who has the authority to remove a board member. "I think that would be my position at this point and to respect that process," he said.

The governor said they will have a better view as to who has the authority possibly this week, then they will go from there.

CHCC chief executive officer Esther L. Muña also refused to comment about the issue at the same news briefing.

In Ogumoro's Sept. 18, 2020, termination letter to Atalig, she cited Atalig's alleged failure to attend board meetings as the reason for his ouster.

But Santos said that, according to Atalig, he only got sporadic notices of scheduled board meetings and that he always attended those meeting when he was informed beforehand.

Santos said Atalig never knew he was no longer a board member after Sept. 17, 2020, until he received Ogumoro's letter by mail on Jan. 5, 2021.

Ogumoro has yet to issue a public statement about the issue.

DCRM
SUMMER
INTERNSHIP
COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
The Division of Coastal Resources Management is looking for 15 CNMI-based college students or college-bound high school graduates with an interest in learning more about coral reef and coastal zone management. Our summer interns work 20 hours a week for 10 weeks from June to August and are paid $10.00 per hour.
To be considered, please submit the following documents by email to outreach@dcrm.gov.mp
CNMI EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION
Which can be found at www.cnmiopm.net
COVER LETTER
RESUME/CV
TRANSCRIPTS
Official or Unofficial
TWO (2) LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION
Instructors and/or Employers Only
POLICE CLEARANCE
Within the Last 3 Months
COPY OF VALID PHOTO ID
Driver's License, Passport, etc.
APPLY BY FRIDAY, APRIL 9, 2021
This summer's internship opportunities include:
MARINE MONITORING ◦ EDUCATION & OUTREACH
SHORELINE MONITORING ◦ SPECIAL AREA MANAGEMENT ◦ REGULATORY COMPLIANCE
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ◦ WATERSHED MANAGEMENT
For more information, contact DCRM at
664-8300 or visit our website at WWW.DCRM.GOV.MP
CORAL REEF

Today is last day to complete 2021 Prevailing Wage Study

Today, March 31, is the last day to complete the 2021 Prevailing Wage Survey.

If you are an employer who has any staff at your establishment and if you haven't already completed the survey, do so as soon as possible. It takes only about two minutes per staff member to fill it out. All private businesses, public agencies, and organizations in the CNMI are urged to participate in the 2021 PWS survey.

The survey data collection period began last March 1, 2021, and ends today, March 31, 2021.

The Central Statistics Division of the CNMI Department of Commerce first announced last Feb. 23, 2021, the beginning of data collection for the 2021 CNMI Prevailing Wage Study to produce the hourly wage statistics for 2021. Like the 2020 PWS, the 2021 data is submitted through a Web portal. Businesses and organizations can access it through cnmidata.commerce.gov.mp.

For companies, agencies, and organizations who registered and participated in the 2020 PWS survey, simply use your username and password that you created in 2020 to login to the portal, update your company/agency/organization information, and submit your employee data for 2021.

For everyone else who will submit survey data for the first time via the CNMI PWS portal, you will be prompted to create a username and a password. Creating your username and password registers you into the site and allows you to provide basic directory information about your company/agency/organization and submit the requested employee data for the survey.

Be sure to allow yourself time to review and understand the survey instructions provided on the portal before proceeding to complete the survey.

The 2018 NMI US Workforce Act requires the CNMI to publish a prevailing wage report annually for CW-1 visa determination and approval by the U.S. Department of Labor. The 2021 PWS data will also be used to publish a separate report detailing the survey methodology with a more detailed occupational wage statistics for PERM, H-1B and H-2B determination and approval by the U.S. Department of Labor.

This will be the CNMI's sixth round of the prevailing wage survey, but is the third annual PWS survey since 2019 under the mandate of the 2018 Workforce Act. ***(PR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

SCC's April membership meeting set

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will host its April general membership meeting on April 7, 2021, at Hyatt Regency Ballroom. The guest speaker is Sixto Igisomar, director of the CNMI Procurement and Technical Assistance Center, who will be sharing updates about the newest business-support center on island as well as how businesses can best position themselves to win federal contracts.

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council will also be sharing their strategic plans and upcoming projects.

Due to COVID-19 protocols, RSVP is required to attend the meeting. To RSVP, register by 12pm on April 6. Due to COVID-19 room capacity restrictions, the SCC is capping its RSVPs at 100 guests. If you RSVP and need to cancel your reservation, email coordinator@saipanchamber.com before 12pm on Tuesday, April 6. ***(PR)***

Adjusted CNMI Judiciary hours

The CNMI Judiciary will be open from 8am to 12pm on Thursday, April 1, 2021, and will be closed from12pm on Thursday, April 1, 2021, Friday, April 2, 2021 (Good Friday holiday), through Monday, April 5, 2021 (Austerity Day). Regular business hours will resume on Tuesday, April 6, 2021. ***(PR)***

5.2-magnitude earthquake

At 5:42am on March 30, 2021 a report of a 5.2-magnitude earthquake occurred at 21.377°N 145.960°E. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories that were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, please contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. ***(PR)***

MLSC submits $200K budget request for FY 2022

The Micronesian Legal Services Corp., a non-profit organization that provides legal services to the indigent community, has asked the House of Representatives for a budget of $200,000 for fiscal year 2022.

MLSC Marianas Office directing attorney Jane Mack and MLSC board director CNMI representative Robert T. Torres told House Speaker Edmund V. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) that their budget request will allow them to maintain their current staff and hire an additional staff attorney.

Mack and Torres said this will allow their office to increase case load acceptance to meet the growing demand for legal aid.

They said that personnel salaries, office support for the delivery of services and administrative expenses for the daily operations in order to maintain their office in the Marianas is also factored into the request.

MLSC provides legal assistance in civil matters at no charge to those unable to afford a private attorney.

They had 33 cases pending in Superior Court as of June 30, 2020, of which 24 were for plaintiffs and nine were for defendants.

MLSC's central administrative office is on Saipan. It has offices throughout Micronesia, including Palau, in each of the four states of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and the newly established office in Guam.

MLSC is governed by a 10-member board of directors, with at least one director representing each of the regions in which they have offices. Robert Ruecho from Yap is the board president. ***(Ferdie De La Torre)***

CUC ADVISORIES

Water service interruption in As Matuis, San Roque, Achugao, Tanapag

There is an ongoing emergency water service interruption for Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers in As Matuis, San Roque, Achugao and Tanapag since March 16, 2021.

The following are the water schedule hours for customers in the affected areas until further notice:

■ Monday, Wednesday and Friday: 6am to 6pm

■ Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday: 24-hour water service

The scheduled water service to the affected areas is due to low water supply in the As Matuis water tank. Over the next few weeks, CUC will continue to build the water tank level in order to continue leak detection to identify large leaks in the distribution system for repair. Customers in the higher elevation areas will experience low pressure to no water on days of Monday, Wednesday and Friday, specifically during the early morning hours as the pressure stabilizes to fill the waterlines. Updates will follow as soon as they are available. CUC highly advises the public to practice water conservation measures during this emergency water service interruption. ***(PR)***

Water service interruption for Flooris Avenue in Garapan

There will be an emergency scheduled water service interruption on Thursday, April 1, 2021, from 9am to 4pm for Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers on Flooris Avenue in Garapan. However, customers in the affected area will receive daily water service from 8:30am to 10:30am until the scheduled repair date listed above.

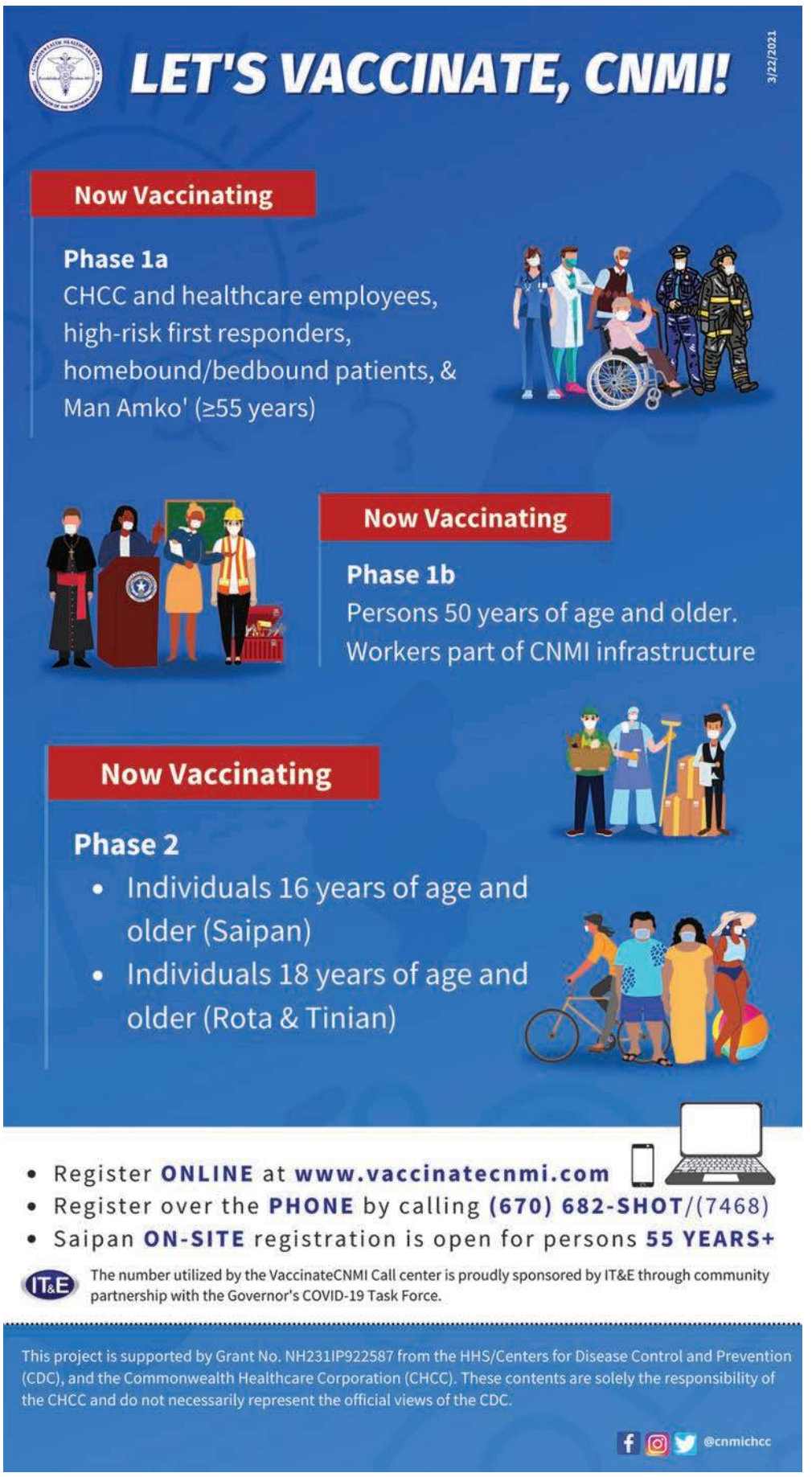
The emergency scheduled water outage is due to the isolation of the 6-inch main waterline repair on Flooris Avenue, Garapan near the Capital Hotel. Water service to the affected areas will resume to normalcy soon after the repairs. ***(PR)***

Water service interruption on Capital Hill, Wireless Ridge, Mt. Tapochau, Papago

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the public that there will be a scheduled water service interruption on Monday, April 5, 2021, from 8:30am to 2pm for customers in the areas of Capital Hill, Wireless Ridge, Mt. Tapochau, and Papago.

The scheduled water outage is due to a 2-inch service lateral waterline repair on Marshall Loop, Capital Hill. Water service to the affected areas will resume soon after the repairs.

CUC continues to work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Hotline (236-4333) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.corn/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/). ***(PR)***


LET'S VACCINATE, CNMI!
3/22/2021
Now Vaccinating
Phase 1a
CHCC and healthcare employees, high-risk first responders, homebound/bedbound patients, & Man Amko' (≥55 years)
Now Vaccinating
Phase 1b
Persons 50 years of age and older.
Workers part of CNMI infrastructure
Now Vaccinating
Phase 2
• Individuals 16 years of age and older (Saipan)
• Individuals 18 years of age and older (Rota & Tinian)
• Register ONLINE at www.vaccinatecnmi.com
• Register over the PHONE by calling (670) 682-SHOT/(7468)
• Saipan ON-SITE registration is open for persons 55 YEARS+
The number utilized by the VaccinateCNMI Call center is proudly sponsored by IT&E through community partnership with the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force.
This project is supported by Grant No. NH231IP922587 from the HHS/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC). These contents are solely the responsibility of the CHCC and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.
@cnmichcc

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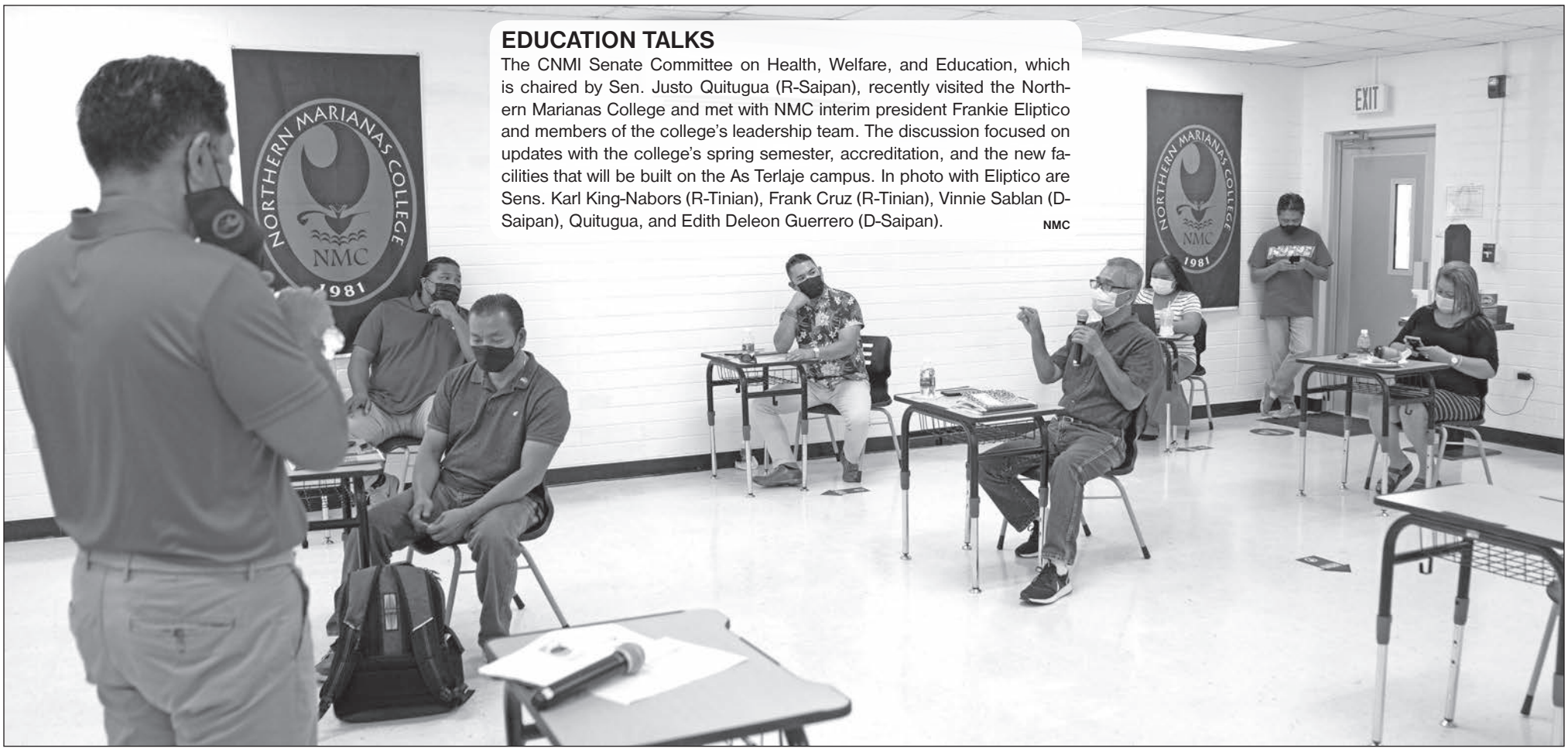
Fax: 235-8760 • E-mail: admin@jcamcd.com



EDUCATION TALKS
The CNMI Senate Committee on Health, Welfare, and Education, which is chaired by Sen. Justo Quitugua (R-Saipan), recently visited the Northern Marianas College and met with NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico and members of the college's leadership team. The discussion focused on updates with the college's spring semester, accreditation, and the new facilities that will be built on the As Terlaje campus. In photo with Eliptico are Sens. Karl King-Nabors (R-Tinian), Frank Cruz (R-Tinian), Vinnie Sablan (D-Saipan), Quitugua, and Edith Deleon Guerrero (D-Saipan). NMC

Red Cross responds to Koblerville fire

The American Red Cross-NMI Chapter's Disaster Action Team responded to a structure fire in Koblerville Wednesday last week, March 24, after receiving a call around 1:45am.

According to an American Red Cross statement, the fire displaced several residents from their homes due to the smoke and heat caused by the fire.

After the residents were taken out of their homes, Red Cross volunteers provided them food assistance and temporary shelter.

One of the responding Red Cross volunteer, Jack Amirez, said it was a sad situation, but he and the other volunteers were just happy to help.

The other three were Richard Defan, Janet Santos, and Chloe Sin, who assisted with logistical and virtual support.

American Red Cross executive director John Hirsh said the volunteers are the backbone of the American Red Cross and they are truly grateful and appreciative of the volunteers.

"Whether it is responding to a flood, fire, or typhoon, our volunteers are committed to assisting our community 24/7," said Hirsh. ***(Justine Nauta)***

TORRES

From Page 1

pending on the age of the child—are expected to make it easier for families to have money available to meet the need for food, clothing, and other necessities for their children.

He thanked the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee for including in the Rescue Plan his request that the CNMI governor be given such authority.

The delegate said Section 9611 of the Rescue Plan provides Torres with $300,000 to cover the administrative costs, if he decided to make the monthly payments.

He said his congressional office also negotiated with Ways and Means to give the CNMI access to a $75-million Temporary Aid for Needy Families Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund in Section 9201 of the American Rescue Plan.

Sablan said the Marianas does not participate in TANF, but that he introduced legislation, H.R. 1773, to make the eligibility permanent.

The delegate said he also thanked last week his colleagues from the House Ways and Means Committee for including federal payment of the Earned Income Tax Credit for the Marianas in Section 9625 of the American Rescue Plan—and make it permanent.

Sablan said the EITC is worth an estimated $25 million for lower-income working families in the CNMI, "although they will only receive this assistance when the Commonwealth Legislature repeals the 100% local tax now imposed on any refundable credit."

Sablan began working on federal funding for the EITC by introducing H.R. 4309 in 2015 and got the provision added to the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act last year.

Last March 19, members of the CNMI House of Representatives unanimously voted to pass on first and final reading a bill that Rep. Christina Marie E. Sablan (D-Saipan) introduced that will repeal a law in order to make working families in the CNMI eligible for the EITC. House Bill 22-19 now goes to the Senate for action. Co-sponsored by several other lawmakers, Sablan's H. B. 22-19 will restore the EITC for low-and moderate-income working families in the CNMI.

EITC is a refundable tax credit in the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Code that helps qualified low- to moderate-income working families and taxpayers get a tax break by allowing them to use the credit to reduce the taxes they owe, and in some cases, increase their tax refunds.

RISE

From Page 1

$0.17341 per kWh. This means residential customers who use 500 kWh of power per month will pay approximately $3.82 more in their monthly billing.

According to a CUC statement yesterday, it has been notified by its fuel supplier, Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc., that there has been an increase in the average international fuel oil prices that will affect the FAC.

The FAC is one of two components that make up the CUC electric kWh rate, which is used to purchase fuel. The second component is the CUC base rate, which is used to fund operations, projects, and debt service. This base rate has not been increased since April 17, 2014.

CUC is required, pursuant to an order previously issued by the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission, to adjust (up or down) the FAC pass-through rate when the Mean of Plans Singapore monthly pricing equals or exceeds a 4.5% differential of the average per gallon cost of fuel used in the calculation of the current FAC rate.

CUC first instituted the Levelized Energy Adjustment Clause in 2009 to recover fuel and fuel related costs, a system also used by power providers in Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In May 2015, the CPUC authorized CUC to change the name of LEAC to FAC to provide customers a more accurate description of the electric rate. ***(PR)***

IPI

From Page 1

when the U.S. Department of Labor notifies the court if IPI fails to pay off its consent judgment.

U.S. District Court Chief Judge Ramona Manglona ordered IPI to pay the remaining balance of the April 2019 consent judgment starting this Thursday, April 1, until Dec. 1. The amount that IPI owes is $1,478,430.72 which includes the first amended consent judgment pf $1,430,574.72 plus $47,856 in unpaid wages.

To settle this amount, Manglona ordered IPI to pay $164,270.08 every first of the month starting April 1, 2021, until Dec. 1, 2021. That's nine installment payments of the total amount owed.

She said if IPI fails to make payment at any time, the USDOL secretary should give a written notice of nonreceipt of payment to IPI. "The defendants shall have 10 business days from the receipt of notice that the payment was not received to trace the payment if it was sent and an additionally 20 calendar days to resolve any issues with a wire transfer if they provide proof to the [U.S. Labor] secretary that the payment was sent by wire," said Manglona.

If IPI fails to make payment after 10 days of missing the payment due date, then the USDOL secretary can declare a default of the amended consent judgment by filing a notice of default with the court and provide a copy of the notice to IPI, Manglona said. In the event the U.S. Labor secretary declares a default, IPI will then be made to pay the full gross amount outstanding and due under this consent judgment, plus post-judgment interest at the rate applicable to deferral judgments from March 30, 2020, until the monetary amounts due are fully paid.

If IPI still fails to make payment five days after 10 days of missing payment, then the receiver—in this case Guam lawyer Joyce Tang—will be authorized to exercise all her powers as receiver to sell IPI's assets, including but not limited to the Flame Tree Terrace Parcels property to pay the total judgment amount and the receiver's costs and fees.

Manglona said if IPI fully complies with the first amended consent judgment and make all the payments required from April 1, 2021 to Dec. 1, 2021 then the Labor secretary will file a satisfaction of judgment notice.

SAIPAN

From Page 1

that a judgment be made in favor of Doyle, and for him to be awarded further relief as the court deems just and proper.

In his filing with the U.S. District Court of the NMI last March 30, Doyle said he was interviewed by agents of the Drug Enforcement Agency twice: on Jan. 7, 2020, and Jan. 9, 2020. He said he was not provided a transcript of the interview but merely a summary that does not accurately reflect his statements during his interview.

Doyle claims that he was wrongfully cited by the DEA and denies violating the Controlled Substance Act or other regulations, Pixley said. "Prescriptions are lawful if they are 'issued for a legitimate medical purpose by an individual practitioner acting in the usual scope of his professional practice,'" said Pixley.

He said Doyle acknowledges that he has an obligation to ensure that all prescriptions for controlled substances be issued for a legitimate medical purpose and that he fully complied with this obligation.

In response to the allegations of excessively prescribing opioids and controlled substances, Pixley said Doyle distributed the prescriptions with good faith belief that the prescriptions and his treatment plan served a legitimate medical purpose.

Harsher penalties pushed vs child sex predators

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) has introduced a bill that will increase the statutory fine and mandatory minimum penalties for sexual assault and sexual abuse of children in the first degree.

Hofschneider said yesterday that his Senate Bill 22-30 is now under committee's review.

Under the bill, sexual abuse of a minor in the first degree is punishable by imprisonment of not more than 30 years, a fine of not more than $100,000, or both, instead of $50,000 under the current law.

Under the legislation, any person convicted of sexual assault in the first degree or sexual abuse of a minor in the first degree shall be sentenced to a mandatory prison term of no less than 15 years, instead of eight years in the current law, if the person convicted has no prior felony conviction, and 25 years, instead of 15 years in the current law, if the person has a prior felony conviction.

Hofschneider stated in the legislation that Public Law 12-82, which became effective on Jan. 7, 2002, revised the CNMI laws dealing with crimes of sexual assault and sexual abuse of children, correcting deficiencies in the law by providing different levels of crime, such as sexual abuse of a minor in the first degree, sexual abuse of a minor in the second degree, and so forth.

Hofschneider

Hofschneider said each of the new crimes proscribed different conduct and provided more severe penalties for conduct that is more harmful and offensive to public safety. He said Public Law 12-82 also increased the penalties dealing with child sex crimes to ensure the protection of the community and to adequately deter persons from engaging in the prohibited conduct. Thus, he said, the maximum penalty for the most severe child sex crimes was increased to imprisonment for not more than 30 years, a level of penalty more in line with that of other jurisdictions at the time.

More than 18 years have passed since the enactment of Public Law 12-82, Hofschneider said, and CNMI laws regarding crimes of sexual assault and sexual abuse of children are still evolving.

He said Public Law 19-72, which became effective on Nov. 17, 2016, amended the Commonwealth Code to remove any time limitations for prosecuting any crime involving sexual conduct, physical or sexual abuse, exhibitionism or sexual exploitation committed against a person under the age of 18.

"Children still need to be protected from sexual assaults and abuses. Too often, children under 18 are the direct victims of sexual violence," he said.

Hofschneider said one way to improve the protection of children is to increase the penalties, including the statutory fine imposed under the Commonwealth Code up to $100,000 and the mandatory minimum sentences for sexual assault or sexual abuse of a minor in the first degree.

He said a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years or half of the maximum 30-year imprisonment is necessary to deter perpetrators and better protect children from sexual assault and abuse.

He said increasing the mandatory minimum sentence for repeat offenders to 25 years imprisonment is necessary to keep perpetrators from repeating the same crimes against the same victim or new victims and to protect such victims.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
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www.dcrm.gov.mp

Eliceo D. Cabrera
Administrator

Janice E. Castro
Director, DCRM

PUBLIC NOTICE

MEETING OF THE CRM AGENCY OFFICIALS

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios through the Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) hereby give notice that a CRM Agency Officials meeting will be held on ***Monday, April 5, 2021, 9:30AM*** at the BECQ 2nd Floor Conference Room, in Lower Gualo Rai, Saipan.

Due to the ongoing threat of COVID-19 and to ensure the health and safety of all, virtual public participation is highly encouraged via video conferencing through Google Meet (https://meet.google.com/ait-aqbq-cdf) or join via telephone by calling the DCRM office at (670) 664-8300 for connection assistance. Google Meet access code may change. Please call DCRM for an update.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Adoption of Agenda

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

III. PERMIT APPLICATION REVIEW
1) CRM Permit Application No. SMS-2000-X-142-A1
Project: ROUTE 35 ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
Applicant: DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
The Department of Public Works is proposing to improve 0.78 mile length of Route 35 (Tun Herman Pan) Road which includes hazard elimination such as inclusion of guardrails, traffic signs, drainage improvements, and pavement rehabilitation.
a. Agencies' Discussion

III. OTHER MATTERS

IV. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony regarding the above agenda items. (NOTE: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session).

/s/ JANICE E. CASTRO
Director, DCRM

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'Insular Cases racist and contrary to the US Constitution'

WASHINGTON D.C.—Natural Resources Committee chair Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.) introduced Friday a bipartisan resolution rejecting the early 20th century U.S. Supreme Court decisions referred to as the *Insular Cases*. The resolution argues that these cases rely on a racist, *Plessy*-era doctrine of "separate and unequal" to establish the relationship between the United States and its territories, made clear by the inclusion of deeply offensive language such as "alien races" and "people with an uncivilized race" when referring to the people living in U.S. territories.

Grijalva's resolution was introduced with Rep. Gregorio Sablan (D-CNMI), Rep. Stacey Plaskett (D-USVI), Rep. Michael San Nicolas (D-Guam), Rep. Jenniffer González-Colon (R-P.R.), Rep. Nydia Velázquez (D-N.Y.), Rep. Jesús "Chuy" García (D-Ill.) and Rep. Ritchie Torres (D-N.Y.)

H. Res. 279—the full text of which is available online at https://bit.ly/3u9UYDL—calls on the courts, the U.S. Department of Justice, and other litigants to reject any continued reliance on the *Insular Cases* in present and future cases because the racially grounded holdings in the *Insular Cases* are contrary to the text and history of the Constitution and have no modern relevance.

Grijalva

Sablan

The legacy of the *Insular Cases*—an unequal legal and political relationship between the U.S. and the territories—continues to threaten the rights and interests of Americans living in the territories.

Part of this legacy is evident in the continued exclusion of U.S. citizens living in the territories from essential federal programs and benefits—an exclusion that multiple federal courts have questioned in recent years.

■ In *United States v. Vaello Madero*, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit unanimously declared unconstitutional the denial of Supplemental Security Income benefits to U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico. The U.S. Supreme Court has taken this case up for review, with argument likely set for October 2021.

■ In *Schaller v. U.S. Social Security Administration*, a federal district court judge delivered a similar ruling for residents in Guam.

■ In *Peña Martínez v. U.S. Department of Health & Human Service*, declared unconstitutional not just the exclusion of Puerto Rico residents from SSI, but also their exclusion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Medicare Part D low-income subsidies.

The ongoing discrimination against citizens in U.S. territories reinforces the need to stop relying on the discredited assumptions about the people living in U.S. territories and antiquated notions of racial inferiority on which they were based.

"The 'Insular Cases,' decided in 1901 by the same Supreme Court that upheld segregation laws, have no place in modern day America," Sablan said. "In these cases, the Supreme Court calls people living in U.S. territories 'alien' and 'savage and restless people,' antiquated notions of racial inferiority that should not be the basis of any contemporary court decisions. Our resolution recognizes these racist and imperialist assumptions for what they are. It rejects the Insular Cases and affirms the importance of equal rights for Americans everywhere, even in the U.S. insular areas."

The resolution is supported by Equally American, a nonpartisan organization that advocates for equal rights and representation for the 3.5 million citizens living in U.S. territories, and the American Civil Liberties Union.

"The Insular Cases are some of the most unrepentantly racist and doctrinally flawed decisions ever handed down by our nation's highest court," Equally American said in a statement yesterday. "They effectively stripped the residents of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands of their constitutional and democratic rights in ways that are fundamentally incompatible with the guiding principles that the United States was founded upon. That they endure is both a regrettable legacy of racial injustice and an example of judicial inertia in spite of evolving standards of decency and fairness."

"The Supreme Court's early 1900s 'Insular Cases' rest on explicit white supremacist beliefs of non-white people's inferiority," said Adriel Cepeda Derieux, senior staff attorney at the ACLU. "They are dangerous relics that stand for the continued second-class status of millions of American citizens. We must reject and eradicate the Insular Cases from law."

Grijalva and the Natural Resources Committee plan to host a legislative hearing in May to discuss the resolution. ***(PR)***

'Discontinue relying on *Insular Cases*'

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D-Arizona), chair of the House Natural Resources Committee, has introduced a resolution (H. Res. 279) acknowledging that the U.S. Supreme Court's decisions in the *Insular Cases* and the "territorial incorporation doctrine" are contrary to the text and history of the U.S. Constitution, rest on racial views and stereotypes from the era of *Plessy v. Ferguson* that have long been rejected, are contrary to our nation's most basic constitutional and democratic principles, and should be rejected as having no place in United States constitutional law.

Weare

Equally American issued the following statement in support of this important resolution:

"The *Insular Cases* are a stain on American history that for far too long have relegated the 3.5 million Americans living in American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands to a second-class status," said Neil Weare, president and founder of Equally American, a nonpartisan public interest organization that works to advance equality and voting rights in U.S. territories. "The shameful legacy of these controversial Supreme Court decisions is rooted in the same racism as *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Yet unlike *Plessy*, which laid the foundation for racial segregation, the *Insular Cases* and the colonial structure they created have yet to be overruled," Weare added. "Equally American applauds Chairman Grijalva's leadership on this important issue along with other cosponsors and urges the House of Representatives to approve this crucial resolution as soon as possible." ***(PR)***

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

for
Cannabis Island, LLC

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Cannabis Island, LLC is proposing to renovate & occupy a portion of a unit on the 1st floor of a pre-existing 2-story building measuring 60' (L) x 114' (W) x 22' (H) for its Cannabis Retail Use. This use is classified as "Cannabis Retail" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot 023 D 26 in the village of Puerto Rico. This area is zoned a Mixed Commercial.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: April 7, 2021
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center, Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, April 6, 2021. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Tatiana Babauta, Chairwoman

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

for
Huang Shun Corporation

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Huang Shun Corporation is proposing to construct a warehouse measuring 50' (L) x 32' (W) x 14'.8" (H) for its storage of Noni products. This use is classified as "Warehousing & General Wholesaling" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot EA 121 "D" in the village of Susupe. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: April 7, 2021
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center, Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, April 6, 2021. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

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/s/ Tatiana Babauta, Chairwoman

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

for
Latte Stoned, LLC

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Latte Stoned, LLC is proposing to utilize two (2) cargo freight containers measuring 40' (L) x 8' (W) x 9' (H) and construct a Growing Canopy Area measuring 60' (L) x 50' (W) x 10' (H) for its Cannabis Farm use. This use is classified as "Cannabis Farm" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot 1479-2-5-1 in the village of Chalan Galaide. This area is zoned as Rural.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: April 7, 2021
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center, Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, April 6, 2021. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Tatiana Babauta, Chairwoman

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

for
Smart Star Inc. dba Smart Star Carwash

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Smart Star Inc. dba Smart Star Carwash is proposing to renovate & occupy an existing structure measuring 65' (L) x 50'.2" (W) x 10' (H) for its car wash use. This use is classified as "Gas Station, Light Repair" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot 001 I 41 in the village of San Antonio. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: April 7, 2021
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center, Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, April 6, 2021. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Tatiana Babauta, Chairwoman

Torres: $244M CDBG-DR grant must be spent at once to stimulate economy

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said Friday that the CNMI needs to immediately infuse into the CNMI economy the $244 million it got in Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery funds to help stimulate the CNMI's economic recovery.

Torres

"The idea here is we shouldn't wait to spend toward the end of that grant. We need to spend that immediately," said Torres at a radio news briefing.

He said spending this money immediately will get people back in track and jumpstart the economy. Hopefully, Torres said, this will also give the young generation the opportunity to participate in the construction sector and help build the CNMI together.

Of the $244 million, $110 million of that is going to the housing program for Saipan and Tinian.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has already approved the CNMI's CDBG-DR action plan that will bring in $244 million to meet the unfulfilled recovery needs of the CNMI after Super Typhoon Yutu and Typhoon Mangkhut in 2018.

At the end of the day, however, the CNMI lacks enough construction workers.

Torres said he told NMHC corporate director Jesse S. Palacios that, although they have six years to complete the housing program, they don't have to wait for six years. "If we can build everything back in two years, then we should. If it takes three years, then we should," Torres said.

He said the government needs immediate action—whether it's permits, procurement, or construction management.

"We cannot wait six months to a year for a project because of pending permits and that's the reason why we are permitting up and hiring more skilled professionals to address the shortfall that we have," the governor said.

Torres said with the CNMI's ongoing lack of construction workers, he hopes the federal government will give the Commonwealth more flexibility. The fact that the CNMI was given 3,000 CW workers under a program for construction will already help a lot, he said. Opening up H2-B visa to the Philippines also gives that opportunity for construction companies or labor agencies access to construction manpower.

Torres said the ultimate goal, though, is to also build local capacity and that is the reason why they are funding and prioritizing the Northern Mariana's Technical Institute. He said it's the reason he has been meeting with the NMTI board of trustee chair Mario Valentino and NMTI interim chief executive officer Jodina Attao to focus on construction.

"I believe that we do have the manpower here," the governor said. It may not be enough but sufficient enough to stimulate not just the economy but also create a career opportunity for those who are currently unemployed.

Torres believes construction is the next big career path that the younger generation can seriously consider if the minimum wage is to going go up to $15 an hour.

Commonwealth Zoning Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 7, 2021 | 5:00 PM
Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center | Susupe
Tel: 234-9661/2 • Fax: 234-9666
www.cnmizoning.com

AGENDA

A. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of 03/03/2021 Zoning Board Meeting minutes
5. Public Comments (not for items to be discussed in item B. Public Hearings)

B. Public Hearings

1. **Conditional Use Application #2020-5819** – Huang Shun Corporation is proposing to construct a warehouse measuring 50' (L) x 32' (W) x 14'.8" (H) for its storage of Noni products. This use is classified as "Warehousing & General Wholesaling" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot EA 121 "D" in the village of Susupe. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.
2. **Conditional Use Application #2020-6075** – Smart Star Inc. dba Smart Star Carwash is proposing to renovate & occupy an existing structure measuring 65' (L) x 50'.2" (W) x 10' (H) for its car wash use. This use is classified as "Gas Station, Light Repair" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot 001 I 41 in the village of San Antonio. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.
3. **Conditional Use Application #2020-5479** – Cannabis Island, LLC is proposing to renovate & occupy a portion of a unit on the 1st floor of a pre-existing 2-story building measuring 60' (L) x 114' (W) x 22' (H) for its Cannabis Retail Use. This use is classified as "Cannabis Retail" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot 023 D 26 in the village of Puerto Rico. This area is zoned a Mixed Commercial.
4. **Conditional Use Application #2020-5841** – Latte Stoned, LLC is proposing to utilize two (2) cargo freight containers measuring 40' (L) x 8' (W) x 9' (H) and construct a Growing Canopy Area measuring 60' (L) x 50' (W) x 10' (H) for its Cannabis Farm use. This use is classified as "Cannabis Farm" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot 1479-2-5-1 in the village of Chalan Galaide. This area is zoned as Rural.

C. New Business
1. Operations Reports (Permitting & Enforcement)

D. Miscellaneous
1. Next Meeting – May 5th
2. Other Matters

E. Adjournment

In an effort to provide public access to this meeting during this pandemic, the Commonwealth Zoning Board will host this meeting via:

Zoom Video Communications
Meeting Link: https://zoom.us/j/6853007492
Meeting Code: 685 300 7492

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
JVA No. 21 – 030

Opening Date: March 23, 2021 • Closing Date: April 7, 2021

POSITION TITLE:	**Trades Assistant Lineperson**
DEPARTMENT:	**Power T & D**
LOCATION:	**Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA**
ANNUAL SALARY:	**$16,742.00 to $22,602.00 per annum, Non- Exempt**
CONTRACT:	**Not Contracted**
POSITION(S):	**Four (4)**

The incumbent will be under the overall supervision of the Power T&D Manager or his/her designee. This class specification represents only the core areas of responsibilities; specific position assignments will vary depending on the needs of Power Division.

Duties:
- The Trades Assistant assists with installations, repairs and general maintenance in assigned service area; operates motorized vehicles, equipment machinery, and hand and power tools.
- Performs routine and preventative maintenance on equipment, vehicles, systems and/or infrastructure; performs basic inspections; and conducts basic troubleshooting of issues.
- Responds to trouble calls as needed.
- Prepares job site for work including gathering and setting up materials and supplies, and setting work safety barriers for protection and to direct traffic flow away from work site.
- Gathers, cleans and returns equipment, materials and supplies used.
- Cleans and maintains work site after project or repair work is complete.
- Monitors equipment; takes readings and collects data; documents equipment readings; prepares and submits data and work reports.
- Performs inventory spot checks to ensure adequate materials and supplies are available for daily maintenance activities.
- Servicing equipment by disassembling, assembling, cleaning and calibrating.
- Assisting with equipment/vehicle inspections.
- Servicing and preparing oil filters.
- Responding to customer calls.
- Maintaining grounds, trimming trees and removing obstacles.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:
Education: High School Diploma, General Education Diploma, or Adult Basic Education.
Knowledge of: Customer service principles; Basic mathematical concepts; Safety procedures and safe work practices; Modern office technology.
Skills in: Providing customer service; Reading maps and drawings; Operating heavy and light equipment machinery, hand and power tools required of assigned area; Adhering to safety procedures and safe work practices; Prioritizing tasks and managing time for efficiency; Identifying issues and solving problems; Providing attention to detail; Taking equipment readings and recording data; Maintaining activity logs and reports; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

Licensing/Certification:
- Valid U.S. Driver's License with appropriate class;

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: You may submit your CUC Employment Application and/or resume at the Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, from Monday to Friday, 7:30am – 4:30pm. Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota can drop it off at the Tinian and Rota Administration office. Application and resume can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org

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Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
JVA No. 21 – 031

Opening Date: March 23, 2021 • Closing Date: April 7, 2021

POSITION TITLE:	**Trades Assistant**
DEPARTMENT:	**Wastewater Division**
LOCATION:	**Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA**
ANNUAL SALARY:	**$16,742.00 to $22,602.00 per annum, Non- Exempt**
CONTRACT:	**Not Contracted**
POSITION(S):	**Five (5)**

The incumbent will be under the overall supervision of the Drinking Water & Wastewater Division Manager or his/her designee. This class specification represents only the core areas of responsibilities; specific position assignments will vary depending on the needs of the Wastewater Division.

Duties:
- The Trades Assistant assists with installations, repairs and general maintenance in assigned service area; operates motorized vehicles, equipment machinery, and hand and power tools.
- Performs routine and preventative maintenance on equipment, vehicles, systems and/or infrastructure; performs basic inspections; and conducts basic troubleshooting of issues.
- Responds to trouble calls as needed.
- Prepares job site for work including gathering and setting up materials and supplies, and setting work safety barriers for protection and to direct traffic flow away from work site.
- Gathers, cleans and returns equipment, materials and supplies used.
- Cleans and maintains work site after project or repair work is complete.
- Monitors equipment; takes readings and collects data; documents equipment readings; prepares and submits data and work reports.
- Performs inventory spot checks to ensure adequate materials and supplies are available for daily maintenance activities.
- Performing daily well and pump station facility maintenance, cleaning and monitoring;
- Assisting plumbing and chlorine maintenance crew;
- Utilizing digging equipment for locating and repairing leaks;
- Repairing and securing pressure reducer valves, main valves, service lines and laterals, and booster pumps;
- Assisting with meter installation and repair;
- Collecting water samples;
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:
Education: High School Diploma, General Education Diploma, or Adult Basic Education.
Knowledge of: Customer service principles; Basic mathematical concepts; Safety procedures and safe work practices; Modern office technology.
Skills in: Providing customer service; Reading maps and drawings; Operating heavy and light equipment machinery, hand and power tools required of assigned area; Adhering to safety procedures and safe work practices; Prioritizing tasks and managing time for efficiency; Identifying issues and solving problems; Providing attention to detail; Taking equipment readings and recording data; Maintaining activity logs and reports; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

Licensing/Certification:
- Valid U.S. Driver's License with appropriate class;

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

They made anti-Asian comments. Now what?

Our society has grown so outraged of late, unapologetic and unforgiving, that every week seems to bring new questions about just how offensive some person's social media post was, what sort of redress is required of them and whether they are fit to keep their job.

They're worthy questions, though, and more complicated than many people might like to think. An array of elements comes into play, such as in the cases of two Black women in leadership positions who, in totally separate situations, had written anti-Asian comments on social media in years past. One of the women, a commissioner of San Francisco schools, should resign. The other, a magazine editor, never should have lost her job.

As we seek to become a less racist nation, our responses to these situations should minimize the rage factor—except in situations that are simply too outrageous—and seek to move us forward as a society, protecting groups from further acts of racism while emphasizing redemption over punishment when reasonable. For starters, those responses should take into account how old the comments were, how offensive they were, whether they render the offenders unable to be effective at their current jobs, and what the offenders did after the comments came to light.

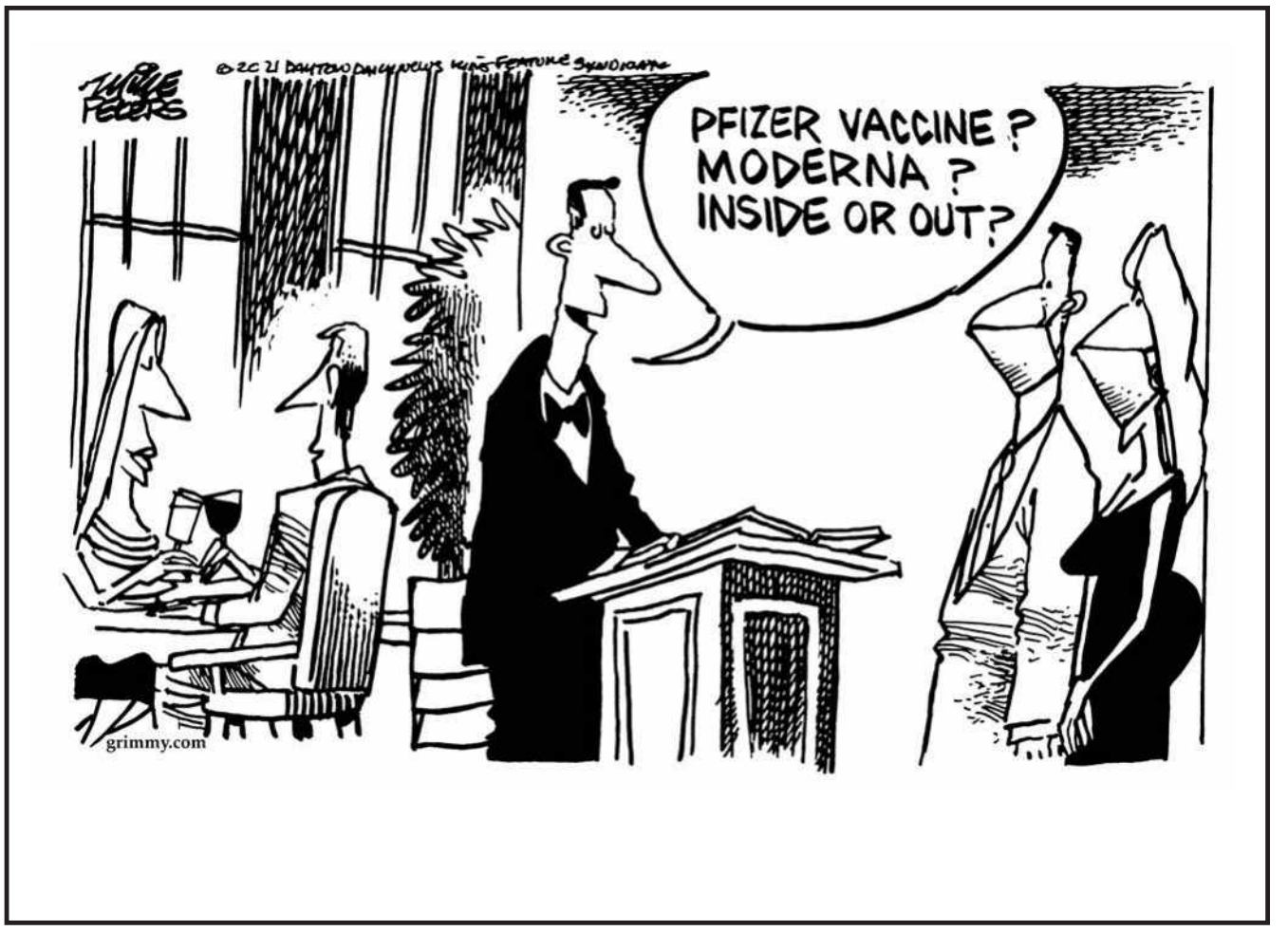
Alison Collins, vice president of the San Francisco Unified School District board, posted a series of derogatory and racially stereotyping tweets about Asian Americans a little more than four years ago. Not yet a member of the school board, she was reacting to some troubling events, including the taunting of a Latino student by Asian American students at a school in the city. Writing about her thoughts, which included concerns that more Asian Americans weren't vocally protesting racism in the days following Donald Trump's election as president, she compared the group to a "house n----r."

She went on to accuse Asian Americans of actively promoting the myth of the model minority and wrote, "They use white supremacist thinking to assimilate and 'get ahead.'"

Her concerns about standing up against racism were legitimate, but her remarks about Asians were heinous, invoking racist tropes and nasty accusations against a racial group that makes up 30% of the school district's enrollment. And though the tweets were from before Collins ran for office, she holds an important and delicate position. It's fair to say that many parents of Asian descent would not trust her to treat them or their children fairly. That trust is crucial to her ability to do her job.

Even so, Collins had a chance to defuse the situation and rebuild trust with a heartfelt apology and a vow to learn more about the concerns of the community she had insulted. Instead, she squandered the opportunity, delivering the kind

See ASIAN on Next Page



How the 'Build Back Better' plan can benefit US territories

Editor's note: The following is the author's written testimony before the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources' oversight hearing on "How the Biden Administration's Build Back Better plan can benefit the U.S. territories." It is being published as a series due to its length. The first part was published on March 26, 2021; the second on March 29, 2021; the third, on March 30, 2021.

Fourth of a series

By RALPH DLG TORRES
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Ralph DLG Torres is governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The relationship between infrastructure developments and access to labor under the CW-1 visa classification and the Northern Mariana Islands U.S. Workforce Act is not solely limited to availability of workers. Under the present law, the CNMI must produce an annual prevailing wage calculation that will govern the wages paid to employees petitioned under the CW-1 program. Should the sampling requirements for this survey provided by the U.S. Department of Labor not be met for a particular occupational category (i.e. three employers with 30 employees for each Standard Occupational Classification), then the wages revert to those in Guam or in the national prevailing wage for that specific occupation. This requirement presents two challenges that must be noted:

First, the CW-1 visa is the only program within the U.S. Immigration System that requires an annual survey. Applications for H visas utilize a two-year timeframe for survey applicability. This presents a pronounced issue with labor market and business cycle fluctuations, wherein disruptions to the economy, such as disasters or industry closures, have a profound impact to the survey results that establish a benchmark for future surveys, leading to rapidly inflating costs that do not account for economic conditions.

Secondly, the reversion to Guam wages negates the important distinctions between the two economies of this region. Guam is a larger, more developed economy, with a different labor force makeup that supports different types of economic activity. One would not make the case that wages in California would appropriately depict the labor conditions in Oregon, yet for many occupations, wages represent the Guam economy and not the conditions of the CNMI. This raises significant challenges to the long-term labor force planning required of large-scale development projects. Should a development, as is the case, require foreign labor to construct, the variations that occur through the present prevailing wage processes, multi-year labor cost projections represent a significant hurdle toward prudent utilization of available resources.

The CNMI's geographic location further impedes progress beyond labor costs and acquisition. Most notably, the impacts caused by Super Typhoon Yutu brought to light the vulnerability of our built environment to the forces of nature. This is a pronounced demonstration of the risks and degradation to our physical infrastructure, but the climatic conditions of the islands, seismic activity, and prevalence of natural disasters require a level of infrastructure investment to mitigate this impacts that are on a magnitude far greater than that of the larger United States. Adding to this the complications with transporting the range of construction materials to the CNMI, and the processes for undertaking large-scale projects in this remote region, significant hurdles present themselves as increased costs of development.

A notable example of these challenges with construction in the CNMI is outlined in a recent Government Accountability Office Report (GAO-20-614T) that found "significant delays" in the implementation of FEMA's Permanent Housing Construction Program due to contracting and construction challenges. These specific challenges have resulted in 65% of the program's applicants opting out the program due to the need for housing sooner than FEMA could provide for it.

To further support holistic resiliency investment efforts, we need the support of our federal partners to streamline processes, reduce the obstacle of complex requirements and lengthy approval periods, and allow for significant flexibility. The CNMI asks that the territories be provided the flexibility necessary to determine what infrastructure needs are most critical to them and to determine how federal funding resources dedicated to this are ultimately utilized. Rather than a "one-size-fits-all" approach, the challenges that are unique to the territories will require a plan that can be customized by and for the territories.

To be continued

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Clarification

I feel an obligation to provide clarification in regards to the March 30, 2021, *Saipan Tribune* story, "Near-drowning ends in death." The reporter did not check the facts.

The story said that the swimmer "was supposed to attend a swimming class but the instructor reportedly did not come, so she, together with the other members of the class, went swimming on their own." This is not accurate. Swimmers knew that 500 Sails was not teaching swimming that day.

My wife and 500 Sails co-founder Emma Perez and I run 500 Sails' swim programs that include the Adult Learn-to-Swim program. We are the instructors who teach Tuesday and Thursday mornings. On March 13, we shut down all 500 Sails public programs in response to the announcement of new instances of COVID-19 cases in the Saipan community. We posted an announcement on our Facebook page and in the Dolphin Club Saipan WhatsApp group. The announcement read:

"500 Sails "Sunday Sails" is temporarily CANCELED (including Gamsun and Sirena).

"In response to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s announcement of four COVID-19 infected individuals in the local community, 500 Sails' Sunday activities are canceled until further notice. This includes sailing teaching and practice sessions, canoe rides, Gamsun Project lifeguard training, and the Sirena Project swim lessons for women and girls. Please pass the word.

"We will continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic with an abundance of caution and cooperation with local health authorities in order to do our part in protecting the health of the community. We encourage all members of our sailing and swimming community to do the same and to get vaccinated as soon as possible."

We also posted notices on the beach-side door of the Guma Sakman of the program closures.

On Monday, March 15, we posted a notice in both Facebook and WhatsApp, specifically for swimmers who may not have read past the "Sunday Sails" title of the previously posted notice. This second posting read:

"Pete and Emma will not be teaching this week (3/16 & 3/18) T/Th at 6am as we wait to see what happens with the latest community spread of Covid. Hope to see you next week!"

After consulting with the COVID-19 Task Force by phone on March 23, we were given the green light to continue our programs and intended to do so starting Sunday, March 28, but had not yet announced it when the swimmer went to swim on the 23rd.

We are deeply saddened by the passing of our friend. Our heartfelt condolences to the family.

Peter J. Perez
Executive Director, 500 Sails

Swimming classes were suspended

Thank you for *Saipan Tribune*'s diligent coverage of the drowning incident that occurred last week

But yesterday, your reporter, Justine Nauta, noted that the swimming instructor did not show up and so the swimmers were left to fend for themselves.

FYI, all swimming and sailing activities were suspended due to the spread of COVID-19 infections on island last March 12. Therefore there were no swim instructions as of the date of the accident. I am a member and we all swim in full acknowledgement of the dangers the ocean can pose.

Emma and Pete Perez have been dedicated instructors of these classes and have been doing so on a voluntary basis with no pay for as long as the Dolphin Swim Club has existed. The article lends itself to blame these praiseworthy individuals for putting the swimmers in jeopardy in some way. They are in no way to blame and have only been diligent in instructing any individuals interested in swimming about what to do in the water. They instruct us on proper breathing techniques and the words that always encourage me are "relax" and "slow down."

The victim of the drowning incident was my friend. She has not been swimming for long but she was proficient and one of the more advanced swimmers on the team. The tide was high and her health was not as good as she recently had suffered from shingles and has not fully recovered. I thought an obituary piece about her life may be appropriate. She is a minister's wife, member of the Korean bowling, badminton associations as well as the Dolphin Swim Team. I have only known her through swimming but she has always shown a sense of bravery, a will to push herself to the challenge as well as discipline and kindness.

She leaves behind two sons (the older one flew in this Monday) and a daughter (flying in from China this Thursday). Her name was Jang Jung-Ran and she told me during one of our swims together that her life goal has been to become fluent in Chinese and to swim. I would say she has achieved success in both measures. She was an inspiration as she lived a life serving others, whether it was through her church (it's the pink one on Beach Road at the beginning of San Antonio past Victory Chapel) or in any of the groups that enjoyed her presence.

The funeral services are from this Monday to Wednesday (6pm-10pm) at the Korean Association of Saipan. She is scheduled to be cremated later this week. Different pastors from different Korean churches on Saipan are offering prayer and services each day.

Kuen-Hee Han
Tour Guide Certification Manager
Marianas Visitors Authority

'Reserve judgment rather than make accusations'

I am writing this letter in response to a wave of negative social media attention in the wake of the governor's decision to replace me as director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. OVR is a vital governmental agency that provides much-needed services to people with disabilities in the CNMI. My time at OVR was not limited to the time I was appointed to the position of director. Before my last post, I proudly worked there as a VR counselor. When I served as director, OVR provided more services to more clients/consumers than it had under any previous administration. I firmly believe this is due to the strict adherence to a policy that places clients of OVR first. The personnel of OVR have worked very hard in the last two years to extend vocational opportunities to those who may not have had opportunities in the past.

Hard work can sometimes lead to tensions in the workplace. This is true of every work environment. When a person seeks to achieve goals never reached by an agency before, sometimes the most extraordinary obstacles come from within the organization. There is a resistance to change. There is a collective attitude best defined by the expression, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." When asked to change, to improve what may not be broken, the organization itself places obstacles in our path. These were the obstacles I failed to overcome in my time as director.

The mission of the OVR was more important to me than any appointed position at the agency. I fervently hope recent decisions do not impact OVR's mission, and that it will continue to serve the people of the CNMI efficiently even after my departure. I know the governor and the hardworking staff of OVR have the best interests of the people in their hearts, as should we all.

Typically, I would not write a letter to the editor to be replaced in a political position. I am doing this to acknowledge the opportunity given, the time and effort put into the many projects I managed, and I do wish to move on from this chapter in my life.

All those who agree to take political appointments recognize the position is about service and is at the pleasure of the appointing authority. Dismissal from an appointed position does not, or at least should not, reflect negatively on an individual's performance. A thank you for the opportunity is all that is required. I do thank the governor for that opportunity.

However, this letter's primary purpose is to express how hurt and emotionally drained I am by those who have been attacking my family and me via social media. Cyberbullying is a pervasive form of harming people, and it does not discriminate by any category. In today's age of social media bullying, it is not uncommon for the least-informed person to form an opinion and state it as fact. These comments and the unfounded claims are shared without regard to the harm they can cause.

Views of people who already comprehend the subject matter are not usually changed by these messages, only reinforced. Those that are unfamiliar with me and what I have accomplished, however, can be unfairly swayed.

We have all observed our humanity's attack by the increased use of anonymous and detached social media sharing, unattached to facts or context. It wasn't until they directed the medium's power my way that I fully appreciated how dangerous and callous social media attacks could be.

I would ask that we take time to reserve judgment rather than making accusations. Please take time to acknowledge how hurtful our careless comments can be—as this situation can happen to anyone. It is larger than me. I advise everyone, especially those who are younger and ridiculed on social media, please reach out to the Community Guidance Center, a parent, or someone trusted and seek assistance.

I will always be proud of my significant and groundbreaking achievements at OVR. It is a vital organization that requires not only the right background and education, but also your heart and soul. Further, I am and have always been committed to bettering the lives of the people of the CNMI, as I too love this community and everything that makes our islands great.

Thank you for providing a platform to share my perspective in this matter. I wholeheartedly look forward to my next juncture; one that offers a chance to use my background, skillsets, and experience to contribute to our unique and diverse community.

Maryann Borja-Arriola
via email

ASIAN

From Page 8

of defensive non-apology that has become all too familiar lately: Her comments had been taken out of context, she claimed. (They hadn't been.) And she apologized only for the pain she may have caused people, not for writing racist comments in the first place. She never even admitted they were racist.

In contrast, Alexi McCammond, who had been newly named as the editor of Teen Vogue magazine, issued a straight-on apology for ugly tweets about Asians she had made on social media 10 years ago—including a reference to "swollen, asian eyes"—along with slurs against gay people. She called those tweets what they were, racist and homophobic, and acknowledged that she had no excuse for having acted that way. And instead of apologizing for people's hurt feelings, she took ownership of her own "hurtful and inexcusable language."

Ten years is a long time, and McCammond already had apologized two years ago, long before being hired at Teen Vogue. She'd also acknowledged her past actions in interviews while applying for the job.

It matters too that McCammond was 17 at the time she made the remarks, not yet an adult. That's not an excuse, but youthful outrageousness is a well-known phenomenon. There is good reason to think she has long since outgrown such harmful ways. Yet she resigned last week under pressure.

That's a shame. People who have held racist views, or acted in racist ways out of callous disregard, can learn and be redeemed. They can become among the best contributors to anti-racist campaigns. The media need more Black journalists in positions of leadership, yet this talented young woman is now marked, perhaps for a very long time.

Collins, on the other hand, should give up her spot on the school board, as two of her fellow board members reportedly are demanding. She has shown little interest in learning from the racist attitudes she displayed and using that along with her position to heal and bring parents and students together in fighting all forms of intolerance. And that's a shame, too.

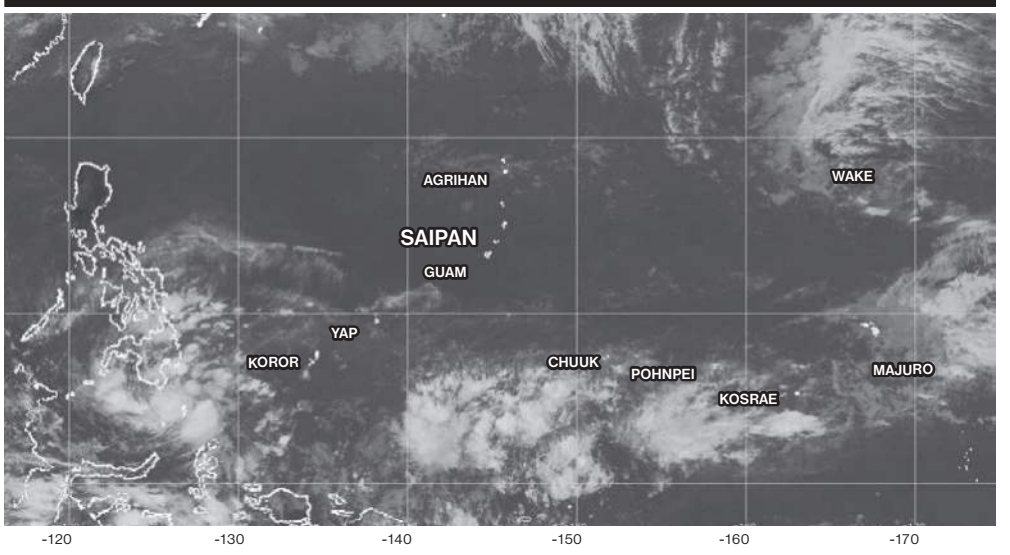
(c) 2021 *The Los Angeles Times*

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds around 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds around 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
86º 76º	86º 76º	86º 76º	86º 76º	86º 76º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:22 AM, TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

The latest infra-red satellite imagery paints an interesting picture, as a group of showers was progressing westward towards the coastal waters east of Rota, but their progression has slowed. Otherwise, just a few hit and miss showers are noted, mainly from Rota northward and the adjoining waters. Wave heights are currently near 6 feet at both the Ritidian and Tanapag buoys, where both also show a water temperature of 83 degrees.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	87 | 78 °F
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	87 | 78 °F
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	87 | 71 °F
Chuuk	Mostly Cloudy	84 | 80 °F
Pohnpei	Overcast	82 | 79 °F
Kosrae	Rain	85 | 80 °F
Majuro	Overcast	85 | 79 °F

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:13 AM	6:29 PM
Thursday	6:12 AM	6:29 PM
Friday	6:11 AM	6:29 PM
Saturday	6:11 AM	6:29 PM
Sunday	6:10 AM	6:29 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	8:03 AM	9:04 PM
Thursday	-	8:53 AM	10:07 PM
Friday	-	9:45 AM	11:11 PM
Saturday	-	10:42 AM	-
Sunday	12:14 AM	11:40 AM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	72 | 63 °F
Beijing	Clear	58 | 38 °F
Hong Kong	Scattered Clouds	71 | 64 °F
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	85 | 71 °F
London	Mostly Cloudy	59 | 50 °F
Los Angeles	Clear	73 | 53 °F
Manila	Partly Cloudy	90 | 77 °F
Melbourne	Clear	75 | 54 °F
Miami	Clear	82 | 67 °F
New York	Overcast	49 | 42 °F
Osaka	Clear	56 | 44 °F
Paris	Clear	64 | 48 °F
Pusan	Overcast	60 | 39 °F
Rome	Clear	65 | 46 °F
Salem	Overcast	54 | 44 °F
San Francisco	Clear	67 | 53 °F
Seoul	Haze	56 | 35 °F
Tokyo	Overcast	57 | 38 °F
Washington, DC	Overcast	74 | 51 °F

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
3:26 AM	Low Tide	0.52
9:06 AM	High Tide	2.00
3:52 PM	Low Tide	-0.03
10:12 PM	High Tide	1.96

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❑ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❑ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❑ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❑ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769.
E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 29, 2021

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:30am	7:10am	1, 4, 5, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:30am	8:50pm	5 via Guam

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	7:05pm	8:50pm	5
UA183	7:15pm	9:10pm	1, 3,

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	4:50am	5:31am	1, 4, 5, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	9:50pm	5:31am+1	5 via Guam

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	9:50pm	3:45am+1	5
UA184	10:25pm	4:10am+1	1, 3

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 9, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

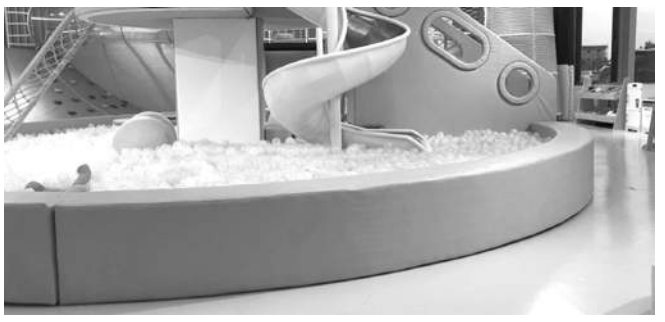
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

Café for Kids opens at Chalan Kiya



Twinkle Kids Land and Café's ball pit. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Why do grownups spend a lot of time in cafes? Opened in January 2020, Twinkle Kids Land & Café now makes sure young ones also get to have fun in a cafe and play until their hearts desire.

Essentially a children's café, its main feature is of course a playground for children to enjoy. Parents waiting for their children are also taken cared of as Twinkle Kids Land & Café also has coffee, smoothies, and some snacks for them to enjoy.

"We're essentially an indoor playground with snacks and drinks, a children's photography, and art education! Twinkle Kids Land & Cafe is a kids café! We have a playground for children to enjoy for two hours and we also have a cafe for parents or anyone to enjoy," a representative of the business told *Saipan Tribune*.

Twinkle Kids Land & Café have been getting rave reviews since opening more than a year ago with one parent praising the facility's cleanliness and bevy of activities children can enjoy.

"Today, I took my kids to play in a great entertainment place. The kids like it very much. The shop is very clean and feels very comfortable. If the kids are over 3 years old, they will have fun by themselves, and the place inside is very safe and suitable for small children. When children play, they will definitely take their children to play more often in the future, and adults can also relax," one parent wrote on Winkle Kids Land & Café's Facebook page.

Twinkle Kids Land & Café is located in the same building where DHL Saipan is along Middle Road beside McDonald's in Chalan Kiya. MARK RABAGO

Twinkle Kids Land & Café is open from Monday to Thursday, 2pm-7pm, and from Friday to Sunday, 2pm-8pm. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Twinkle Kids Land & Café's mini kitchen.

Another satisfied parent said Twinkle Kids Land & Café "is a great place for kids to exercise their gross motor skills which gives parents/guardians a break to relax."

Currently, they have a 50% off promotion every Monday where entry tickets are only $5 (down from $9.90) and Tuesday selected drinks are 50% off.

As far as COVID-19 is concerned, Twinkle Kids Land & Café said they fully adhere to the guidelines set by the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force. "We follow all the guidelines by wiping our café tables and chairs after every family and for the playground and sanitize the toys/ball pit every two hours!"

Twinkle Kids Land & Café, however, lamented the negative effects the pandemic has done to its operations. "COVID-19 affected our operations because our main focus are kids, but we know parents are very careful with the outbreak toward their children so not much families came by as much as when we open. But when it started to calm down, we started having more and more families come in once again."

Twinkle Kids Land & Café is open from Monday to Thursday, 2pm-7pm, and from Friday to Sunday, 2pm-8pm (unless they have a private party, then they're close for the reserved day). For the playground, entry ticket for every child is $9.90 for two hours. Children need socks to play, but if you do not have a pair, they sell them for $2 a pair.

Twinkle Kids Land & Café is located in the same building where DHL Saipan is along Middle Road beside McDonald's in Chalan Kiya. For more information, call 235-6889, email jd.inc.spn@gmail.com, or visit their Facebook page: Twinkle Kids Land and Café.

Suez Canal reopens after stuck cargo ship is freed

SUEZ, Egypt (AP)—Salvage teams on Monday finally freed the colossal container ship stuck for nearly a week in the Suez Canal, ending a crisis that had clogged one of the world's most vital waterways and halted billions of dollars a day in maritime commerce.

A flotilla of tugboats, helped by the tides, wrenched the bulbous bow of the skyscraper-sized Ever Given from the canal's sandy bank, where it had been firmly lodged since March 23.

The tugs blared their horns in jubilation as they guided the Ever Given through the water after days of futility that had captivated the world, drawing scrutiny and social media ridicule.

"We pulled it off!" said Peter Berdowski, CEO of Boskalis, the salvage firm hired to extract the Ever Given. "I am excited to announce that our team of experts, working in close collaboration with the Suez Canal Authority, successfully refloated the Ever Given … thereby making free passage through the Suez Canal possible again."

Navigation in the canal resumed at 6 p.m. local time (1600 GMT, noon EDT) said Lt. Gen. Osama Rabei, head of the Suez Canal Authority, adding that the first ships that were moving carried livestock. From the city of Suez, ships stacked with containers could be seen exiting the canal into the Red Sea.

At least 113 of over 420 vessels that had waited for Ever Given to be freed are expected to cross the canal by Tuesday morning, Rabei added at a news conference.

Analysts expect it could take at least another 10 days to clear the backlog on either end.

LOOKING FOR STAY IN NANNY/HOUSEKEEPER
Duties include: general household cleaning and tidying, laundry, ironing, organizing homes and grocery. Also cooking/help in the kitchen, childcare/baby sitting.
Job location: Guam
Please contact Rani
at shivrani10@gmail.com or
+1671-686-8348.

Accountant and Auditor: Bachelor's degree in Economics or related disciple (may be foreign equivalent). Examine, analyze, and interpret accounting records for the purpose of giving advise or preparing income controls over financial reporting, or other agreed-upon external audit report. No experience required. Special requirement: knowledge of US Federal, Guam and CNMI taxes, knowledge of generally accepted accounting principle and generally accepted audited standards.

Send resume to Burger & Comer, P.C.,
Attn: Human Resources,
P.O. Box 504053, Saipan, MP 96950

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Korean American Cable Vision Inc., a CNMI corporation was dissolved on September 30, 2016. Korean American Cable Vision Inc. filed articles of dissolution with the CNMI Registrar of Corporation on March 29, 2021. This notice is being published in accordance with 4CMC 4607.

Any creditor and person with outstanding claims against the Company is requested to notify the corporate office as soon as possible.

The claim may be sent to:
Korean American Cable Vision Inc.
P.O. Box 502948,
Saipan, MP 96950

The President

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Building Services Corporation, a CNMI corporation was dissolved on December 5, 2017. Building Services Corporation filed articles of dissolution with the CNMI Registrar of Corporation on January 18, 2018. This notice is being published in accordance with 4CMC 4607.
Any creditor and person with outstanding claims against the Company is requested to notify the corporate office as soon as possible.

The claim may be sent to:
Building Service Corporation
P.O. Box 502948,
Saipan, MP 96950

The President

DELTA MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (SAIPAN)
Has an opening for

Accountant

Core Responsibilities:
- Demonstrate and execute accounting controls and principles.
- Maintain accurate general ledger and preparing month-end P&L and financial statements
- Work and collaborate with a small team.
- Complete and manage daily site audits for accuracy.
- Complete bank account reconciliations in a timely manner.
- Prepare timely BGR tax reports.
- Accurately interpret financials and data.
- Manage business using Quick Books accounting program.
- Must learn NAV POS and Backoffice system.
- Adhere to and meet strict reporting deadlines.
- Manage Accounts payable and Accounts receivable
- Reports directly to the owner.

Core Skills:
- Must demonstrate excellent Microsoft Word, Excel and QuickBooks skills.
- Must demonstrate ability to effectively in English communicate verbally and in writing.
- 5 years accounting experience on Saipan.
- Must have a 4-year accounting degree.
- On island references & police clearance required

E-mail Resume and References to islandtrainingsolutions@gmail.com and deltaspn@pticom.com

Nation

Biden, CDC director warn of virus rebound if nation lets up

AP
President Joe Biden speaks during an event on COVID-19 vaccinations and the response to the pandemic, in the South Court Auditorium on the White House campus, Monday, March 29, 2021, in Washington.

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden and a top health official warned that too many Americans are declaring virus victory too quickly, appealing for mask requirements and other restrictions to be maintained or restored to stave off a "fourth surge" of COVID-19. The head of the CDC said she had a feeling of "impending doom" if people keep easing off.

The double dose of warnings on Monday came even as Biden laid out hopeful new steps to expand coronavirus vaccinations, with all adults to become eligible over the next five weeks. Biden announced plans to expand the number of retail pharmacies that are administering vaccines, and investments to help Americans get to vaccination sites. But the optimism was tempered by stark warnings about the potential for another wave of cases.

"This is deadly serious," Biden said, urging governors to reinstate mask mandates and other restrictions that some states have been easing.

Hours earlier, during a virtual White House health briefing, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, grew emotional as she reflected on her experience treating COVID-19 patients who are alone at the end of their lives.

"We have so much to look forward to, so much promise and potential of where we are and so much reason for hope," she said. "But right now, I'm scared."

"I'm going to lose the script, and I'm going to reflect on the recurring feeling I have of impending doom."

Cases of the virus are up about 10% over the past week from the previous week, to about 60,000 cases per day, with both hospitalizations and deaths ticking up as well, Walensky said. She warned that without immediate action the U.S. could follow European countries into another spike in cases and suffer needless deaths.

"I have to share the truth, and I have to hope and trust you will listen," she said.

Later Monday, Biden addressed the nation from the White House, declaring, "If we let our guard down now, we can see the virus getting worse, not better. People are letting up on precautions, which is a very bad thing."

Biden delivered a direct appeal to governors, state and local leaders to reinstate mask-wearing requirements if they have lifted them, and said he encouraged leaders to pause plans to further ease virus-related restrictions.

"Please, this is not politics, reinstate the mandate if you let it down," he said.

Biden announced that by April 19 at least 90% of the adult U.S. population would be eligible for vaccination—and would have access to a vaccination site within 5 miles of home. Quick vaccination would still depend on supply.

Biden had previously directed that all states make all adults eligible for vaccination by May 1, but many have moved to lift eligibility requirements sooner in anticipation of supply increases.

Meanwhile, the White House is moving to double the number of pharmacies participating in the federal retail pharmacy program—it has emerged as among the most efficient avenues for administering vaccines—and increase the number of doses for them to deliver. Retail pharmacies are located relatively close to most Americans and have experience delivering vaccines like flu shots.

Biden announced that the U.S. is expecting delivery of 33 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine this week—including 11 million of the single-dose Johnson & Johnson shot.

More than 1 in 5 adults and nearly 50% of senior American are fully vaccinated, according to data from the CDC. On Thursday, the U.S. set new single-day record for shots in arms: more than 3.2 million.

"Now is not the time to let down," Biden said. "Now's not the time to celebrate. It is time to do what we do best as a country: our duty, our jobs, take care of one another."

"Fight to the finish," he added. "Don't let up now."

Walensky and Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert, appealed to elected officials, community leaders and everyday Americans to maintain social distancing measures and mask wearing.

Witness describes seeing Floyd 'slowly fade away'

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—A man who was among onlookers shouting at a Minneapolis police officer to get off George Floyd last May was to continue testifying Tuesday, a day after he described seeing Floyd struggle for air and his eyes rolling back into his head, saying he saw Floyd "slowly fade away ... like a fish in a bag."

Donald Williams, a former wrestler who said he was trained in mixed martial arts including chokeholds, testified Monday that he thought Derek Chauvin used a shimmying motion several times to increase the pressure on Floyd. He said he yelled to the officer that he was cutting off Floyd's blood supply.

Williams recalled that Floyd's voice grew thicker as his breathing became more labored, and he eventually stopped moving.

"From there on he was lifeless," Williams said. "He didn't move, he didn't speak, he didn't have no life in him no more on his body movements."

Williams was among the first prosecution witnesses as trial opened for Chauvin, 45, who is charged with murder and manslaughter in Floyd's death.

Prosecutors led off their case by playing part of the bystander video that captured Floyd's arrest on May 25. Chauvin and three other officers were fired soon after the video touched off outrage and protest, sometimes violent, that spread from Minneapolis around the world.

Prosecutor Jerry Blackwell showed the jurors the footage at the earliest opportunity, during opening statements, after telling them that the number to remember was 9 minutes, 29 seconds — the amount of time Chauvin had Floyd pinned to the pavement last May.

The white officer "didn't let up" even after a handcuffed Floyd said 27 times that he couldn't breathe and went limp, Blackwell said.

"He put his knees upon his neck and his back, grinding and crushing him, until the very breath — no, ladies and gentlemen — until the very life was squeezed out of him," the prosecutor said.

Chauvin attorney Eric Nelson countered by arguing: "Derek Chauvin did exactly what he had been trained to do over his 19-year career."

Floyd was fighting efforts to put him in a squad car as the crowd of onlookers around Chauvin and his fellow officers grew and became increasingly hostile, Nelson said.

The defense attorney also disputed that Chauvin was to blame for Floyd's death.

Floyd, 46, had none of the telltale signs of asphyxiation and he had fentanyl and methamphetamine in his system, Nelson said. He said Floyd's drug use, combined with his heart disease, high blood pressure and the adrenaline flowing through his body, caused a heart rhythm disturbance that killed him.

"There is no political or social cause in this courtroom," Nelson said. "But the evidence is far greater than 9 minutes and 29 seconds."

Blackwell, however, rejected the argument that Floyd's drug use or any underlying health conditions were to blame, saying it was the officer's knee that killed him.

Minneapolis police dispatcher Jena Scurry testified that she saw part of Floyd's arrest unfolding via a city surveillance camera and was so disturbed that she called a duty sergeant. Scurry said she grew concerned because the officers hadn't moved after several minutes.

"You can call me a snitch if you want to," Scurry said in her call to the sergeant, which was played in court. She said she wouldn't normally call the sergeant about the use of force because it was beyond the scope of her duties, but "my instincts were telling me that something is wrong."

The video played during opening statements was posted to Facebook by a bystander who witnessed Floyd being arrested after he was accused of trying to pass a counterfeit $20 bill at a convenience store. Jurors watched intently as the video played on multiple screens, with one drawing a sharp breath as Floyd said he couldn't breathe. Chauvin sat quietly and took notes, looking up at the video periodically.

Trump's heir? Pence reemerges, lays groundwork for 2024 run

WASHINGTON (AP)—When former President Donald Trump was asked to list those he considers the future leaders of the Republican Party, he quickly rattled off a list of names, including Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and Sens. Josh Hawley and Ted Cruz. Conspicuously absent from the list: Mike Pence.

The former vice president is steadily reentering public life as he eyes a potential run for the White House in 2024. He's joining conservative organizations, writing op-eds, delivering speeches and launching an advocacy group that will focus on promoting the Trump administration's accomplishments.

But Trump's neglect in mentioning Pence during a podcast interview earlier this month signals the former vice president's unique challenge. For someone who built a reputation as one of Trump's most steadfast supporters, Pence is now viewed with suspicion among many Republicans for observing his constitutional duty in January to facilitate a peaceful transfer of power to the Biden administration, a decision that still has Trump fuming.

To prevail in a Republican presidential primary, Pence may have to reinforce his loyalty to Trump while defending his decisions during the final days of the administration when the president falsely alleged widespread voter fraud, contributing to a deadly riot at the U.S. Capitol. If anyone can achieve this awkward balance, some Republicans say, it's Pence.

"Anybody who can pull off an endorsement of Ted Cruz and become Donald Trump's vice presidential nominee should not be counted out," said Republican strategist Alice Stewart, who worked for Cruz's 2016 presidential campaign when Pence endorsed him. "He has a way of splitting hairs and threading the needle that has paid off in the past."

Pence aides generally brush off talk of the next presidential election. They insist he is focused on his family and next year's midterm elections, when Republicans are well positioned to regain at least one chamber of Congress. Allies argue that, over time, the anger will subside.

World

WHO REPORT:

COVID likely 1st jumped into humans from animals

GENEVA (AP)—A joint World Health Organization-China study on the origins of COVID-19 says that transmission of the virus from bats to humans through another animal is the most likely scenario and that a lab leak is "extremely unlikely," according to a draft copy obtained by The Associated Press.

The findings offer little new insight into how the virus first emerged and leave many questions unanswered. But the report does provide more detail on the reasoning behind the researchers' conclusions.

The team proposed further research in every area except the lab leak hypothesis—a speculative theory that was promoted by former U.S. President Donald Trump among others. It also said the role played by a seafood market where human cases were first identified was uncertain.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious diseases expert, said he would like to see the report's raw information first before deciding about its credibility.

"I'd also would like to inquire as to the extent in which the people who were on that group had access directly to the data that they would need to make a determination," he said. "I want to read the report first and then get a feel for what they really had access to--or did not have access to."

The report, which is expected to be made public Tuesday, is being closely watched since discovering the origins of the virus could help scientists prevent future pandemics—but it's also extremely sensitive since China bristles at any suggestion that it is to blame for the current one.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said experts from seven different U.S. government organizations including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institute of Health and the Department of Homeland Security had the report in hand.

"Seventeen experts, longstanding leaders from the field, including epidemiology, public health, clinical medicine, veterinary medicine, infectious disease, law, food security, biosafety, biosecurity--we have a lot of experts in government--will be reviewing this report intensively and quickly," she said at a daily briefing.

Matthew Kavanagh of Georgetown University said the report deepened the understanding of the virus's origins, but more information was needed.

"It is clear that that the Chinese government has not provided all the data needed and, until they do, firmer conclusions will be difficult," he said in a statement.

Last year, an AP investigation found the Chinese government was strictly controlling all research into its origins. And repeated delays in the report's release have raised questions about whether the Chinese side was trying to skew its conclusions.

Thousands flee Myanmar airstrikes, complicating crisis

MAE SAKOEP, Thailand (AP)—Thai soldiers began sending back some of the thousands of people who have fled a series of airstrikes by the military in neighboring Myanmar, people familiar with the matter said Monday. But Thai officials denied that as the insecurity on the border added a new dimension to an already volatile crisis set off by a coup in Myanmar.

The weekend strikes, which sent ethnic Karen people seeking safety in Thailand, represented another escalation in the violent crackdown by Myanmar's junta on protests of its Feb. 1 takeover. On Saturday, more than 100 people were killed in and around demonstrations throughout the country—the bloodiest single day since the takeover.

The violence by the Myanmar military—both on the border and in cities around the country—raised the question of whether the international community would respond more forcefully than it has thus far to a coup that ousted the government led by Aung San Suu Kyi and reversed years of progress toward democracy.

Britain called for a closed meeting of the U.N. Security Council which will be held Wednesday afternoon, council diplomats said ahead of an official announcement. The council has condemned the violence and called for a restoration of democracy, but has not yet considered possible sanctions against the military, which would require support or an abstention by Myanmar's neighbor and friend China.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the surge in killings by the military on Armed Forces Day "absolutely horrendous," and urged greater unity and commitment by the international community to put pressure on the coup leaders to reverse course and go back to "a serious democratic transition."

"My message to the military is very simple: Stop the killing. Stop the repression of the demonstrations. Release the political prisoners, and return power to those that have really the right to exercise it," he told reporters at U.N. headquarters in New York.

Guterres said he's very worried that many trends look irreversible, "but hope is the last thing we can give up on."

Newlywed militant suspects blamed in Indonesia church attack

MAKASSAR, Indonesia (AP)—A recently married couple with suspected militant links used pressure cooker bombs to blow themselves up outside a Roman Catholic cathedral during Palm Sunday Mass, Indonesian officials said Monday.

The attack wounded 20 people, including four church guards, and broke windows at the church and nearby buildings in Makassar, the capital of South Sulawesi province.

The couple were married six months ago and police were investigating their house in Makassar, National Police spokesperson Argo Yuwono said.

Police identified them only by their initials, L and his wife, YSF. Neighbors of the couple identified the man as Lukman and his wife as Dewi and said they were between 23 and 26 years old.

The attackers detonated their bombs when they were confronted by guards outside the church.

The pressure cookers contained explosive materials and nails to increase their harm to victims, said Makassar city police chief Witnu Urip Laksana.

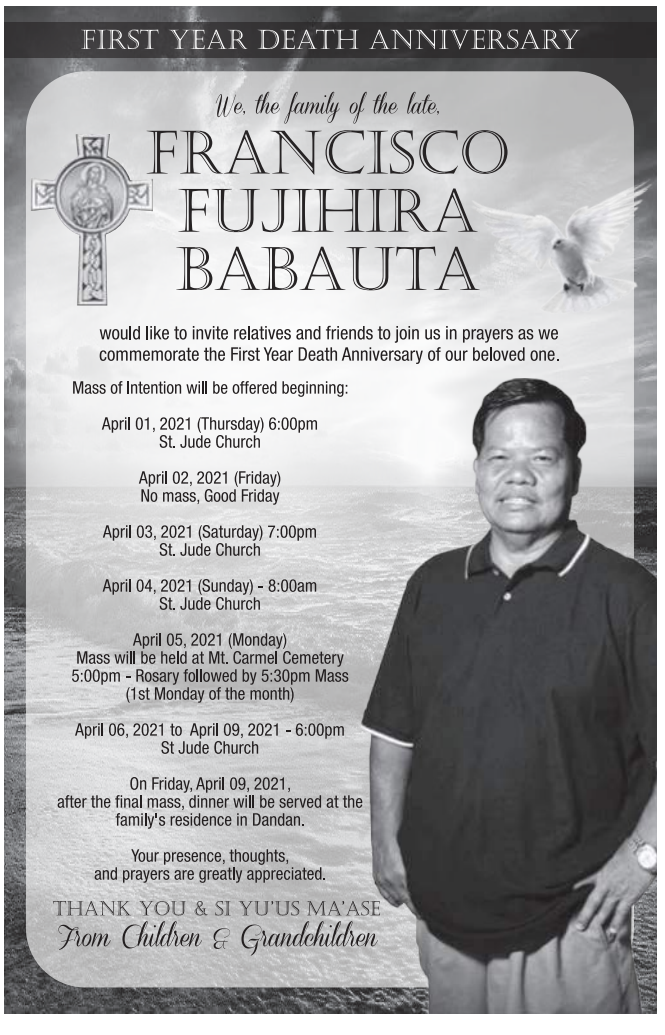
Police carried out DNA tests to determine the attackers' identities, Laksana said.

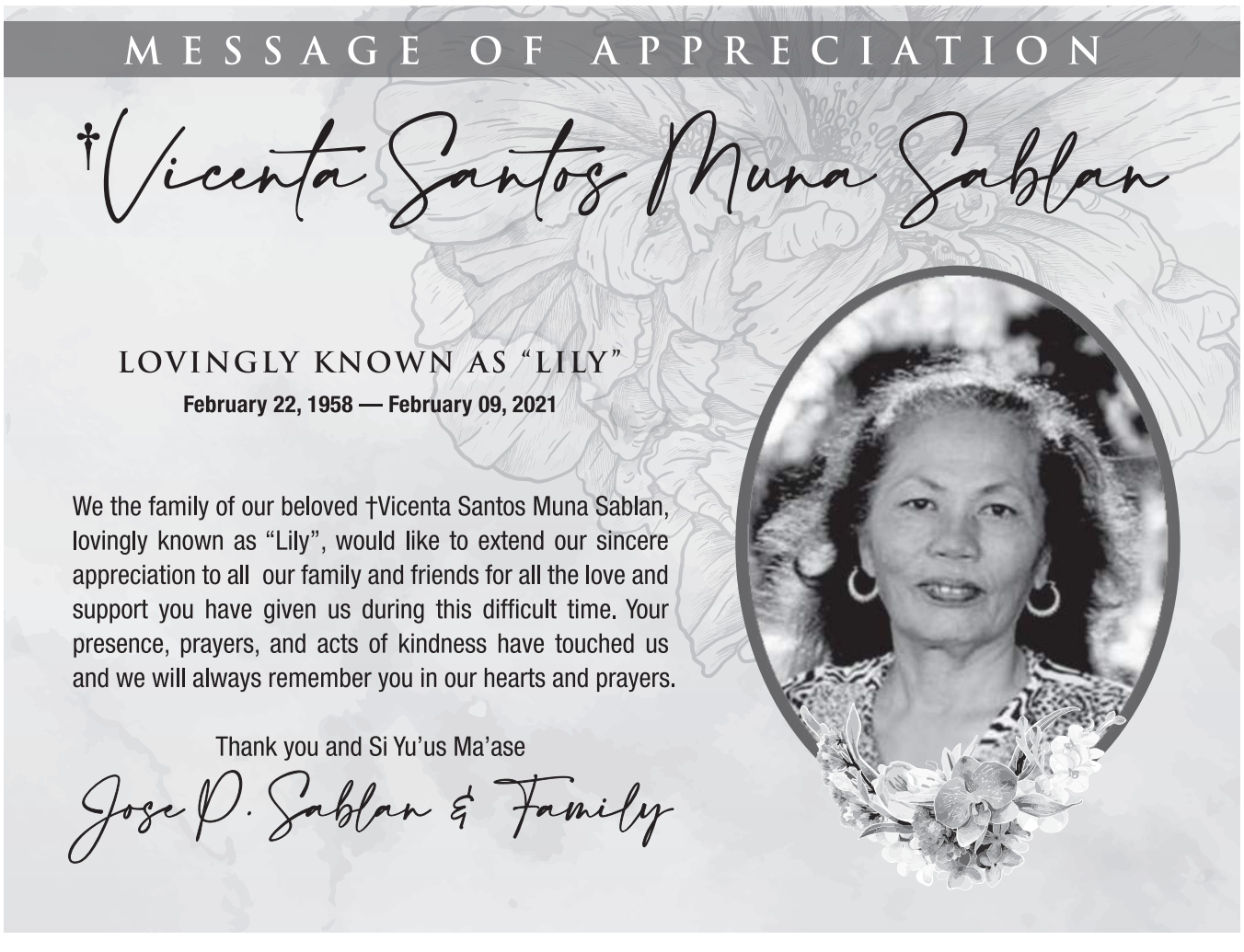
The couple were believed to have been members of Jemaah Anshorut Daulah, which has pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group and carried out a series of suicide bombings in Indonesia.

They included a 2016 Starbucks attack in Jakarta which killed four civilians and four militants, an attack on a bus terminal in the capital that killed three police officers and an attack on a church in Kalimantan that killed a 2-year-old girl a year later. Several other children suffered serious burns in the Kalimantan attack.

Indonesia's last major militant attack was in May 2018, when two families carried out suicide bombings on churches in Surabaya, killing a dozen people including two young girls whose parents involved them in one of the attacks. Police said the father was the leader of a local affiliate of Jemaah Anshorut Daulah.

One of the attackers in Makassar was believed to have had links to a 2019 suicide attack that killed 23 people at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral in the Philippine province of Sulu, Indonesian National Police Chief Listyo Sigit Prabowo said.


FIRST YEAR DEATH ANNIVERSARY
We, the family of the late,
FRANCISCO FUJIHIRA BABAUTA
would like to invite relatives and friends to join us in prayers as we commemorate the First Year Death Anniversary of our beloved one.
Mass of Intention will be offered beginning:
April 01, 2021 (Thursday) 6:00pm
St. Jude Church
April 02, 2021 (Friday)
No mass, Good Friday
April 03, 2021 (Saturday) 7:00pm
St. Jude Church
April 04, 2021 (Sunday) - 8:00am
St. Jude Church
April 05, 2021 (Monday)
Mass will be held at Mt. Carmel Cemetery
5:00pm - Rosary followed by 5:30pm Mass
(1st Monday of the month)
April 06, 2021 to April 09, 2021 - 6:00pm
St Jude Church
On Friday, April 09, 2021,
after the final mass, dinner will be served at the family's residence in Dandan.
Your presence, thoughts,
and prayers are greatly appreciated.
THANK YOU & SI YU'US MA'ASE
From Children & Grandchildren


MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION
†Vicenta Santos Muna Sablan
LOVINGLY KNOWN AS "LILY"
February 22, 1958 — February 09, 2021
We the family of our beloved †Vicenta Santos Muna Sablan, lovingly known as "Lily", would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all our family and friends for all the love and support you have given us during this difficult time. Your presence, prayers, and acts of kindness have touched us and we will always remember you in our hearts and prayers.
Thank you and Si Yu'us Ma'ase
Jose P. Sablan & Family

Local designer shares trends and tips for bathroom upgrades

By DANIELLE STALLWORTH
THE ANNISTON STAR, ALA.

Any experienced home buyer or seller will tell you that one of the big ticket items when it comes to houses is the bathroom. But why do we care so much about them?

Scott Skinner, an Anniston-based decorating consultant who has been doing residential and commercial design work for about 20 years, said it's because the bathroom is the area where we start and end the day.

"Bathrooms are where you collect your thoughts and enhance yourself," Skinner said. "They can become expensive, but with careful planning and the correct fixtures and finishes, you can have the space of your dreams."

Whether you're looking to transform your bathroom into a completely new oasis or just give it a subtle facelift, these trends and tips are sure to give you an inspiration boost!

What trends are you seeing in bathroom renovations?

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The master bath of a Los Angeles guesthouse renovated by architect Marc Appleton and designer David Netto.

■ A lot of freestanding tubs. People are also wanting larger showers, and sometimes that means taking out the built-in tubs to make room. A lot of times, the built-in tubs are under obscure decorative windows, and you can include the window into the new shower (creating a new tile surround).

■ Two freestanding his and hers vanities (not just your typical pedestal sinks) instead of one long one.

■ Medicine cabinets are making a comeback. Not your hang-on-the-wall ones, but cutting into the wall. I've had a cabinet guy make a frame (then add in a mirror) to match the vanity. This can create a custom look.

■ A lot of going back to classic timeless designs. Classic doesn't mean boring.

■ Natural elements playing into a bath design. Tans and cream whites with hints of natural.

Tub to walk-in shower conversions seem to be gaining popularity. Is that something you've seen or done before?

Yes, but I think it depends on your needs, long-term or resale. I have designed some wet rooms which include the shower and tub in the same area of the bath. One thing to consider is a curbless walk in shower. They are great for when you have a glass front and sides.

If someone wants to renovate their bathroom, what do you suggest they start with?

Take some time to plan. I know that sounds basic, but you wouldn't believe how many people just start using all of their "likes" without making sure they flow. Write down all of your needs from storage of personal items to towels and water bottles. There are many variables in a bathroom design, so we need to make an outline: measure and scale out the room, then plan lighting accordingly (wall sconces or vanity lights?). Don't forget ceiling lighting. Think about unique features to set your space apart.

When I meet a client about a bath remodel or refresh, you have your hardscapes like flooring, cabinetry and wall structures, and softscapes like countertops, lighting, mirrors and fixtures. We want to look at what's the most cost effective right then, but always make sure that when you come back later to do a little more you haven't wasted money or hurt the overall design.

Are there any DIY projects that you would suggest to a homeowner looking for some quick and easy upgrades?

You can change your light and vanity fixtures (don't forget to support your local lighting and plumbing stores). Have some fun with mirrors. One time I collaged a client's kids' pictures around a mirror frame, added their favorite color, and the outcome was they had their own sink space. Also, something as simple as changing towels can make a difference. Add some color in those natural baths.

Design Recipes: 10 tips to improve your bath

By CATHY HOBBS
Tribune News Service
(TNS)

They are often ignored or discarded spaces. But bathrooms regardless of the size can be a source of calm and opportunity for design. Where do you start? While renovations can make for the perfect "project", they are often costly to take on.

With this is mind, there are a number of ways to spice up your bath, without breaking the bank. Looking for ideas? Here are our top 10 tips, to help make your bath an elegant, calming oasis.

1. Bring the outdoors in. Greenery is a great place to start, from trees to plants, bringing in greenery can help create a sense of calm.

2. Include natural elements. From stone, to sand and even natural elements such as wood, integrating organic elements can help to create a sense of serenity.

3. Add pops of color, from flowers and succulents, look for ways to integrate color and texture.

A bathroom wrapped in stone, creates a sense of luxury in this modern, urban bathroom. (HANDOUT/TNS)

4. Hang artwork. Walls don't have to be bare and boring. Artwork can help to add color and a sense of whimsy.

5. Make a statement with tile. Whether it's a border, to a small pattern, to overall coverage, tile is one way to make a bold statement in the bathroom.

6. Add windows to your bathroom space. The light can truly help to elevate these small spaces.

7. Go big! Big mirrors and large walls of mirrors reflect light and can make these small spaces feel bigger.

8. Paint! From an accent color to overall coverage, paint allows one to bring in color and interest.

9.Add luxury elements. Bathrooms can truly integrate a sense of calm. From salts, to oils and candles, go for it!

10. Create a sense of space. Creating a bath that is separate and distinct, from a stand in shower, remains on trend and the preferred design of architects and interior designers.

Life & Style

No Oscars or sensitive art spark Hong Kong censorship fears

HONG KONG (AP)—Decisions in Hong Kong not to display a politically sensitive photograph in a museum exhibition and not broadcast the annual Academy Awards for the first time in decades have prompted concerns that Beijing's crackdown on dissent in the city is extending to arts and entertainment.

Hong Kong authorities have taken a tougher stance on opposition following Beijing's imposition of a national security law on the city, arresting prominent pro-democracy activists and participants in anti-government protests in 2019.

The twin announcements on the Oscars and the photograph came as China's top legislature began deliberating a revamp to Hong Kong's election laws that would put more power in the hands of a committee dominated by Beijing loyalists.

Henry Tang, head of the city's West Kowloon Cultural District Authority, said at a news conference Monday that there are no plans to exhibit a photo at the opening of the city's new M+ museum by dissident Chinese artist Ai Weiwei showing him holding up his middle finger at Tiananmen Square in Beijing.

The decision prompted concern that the security law will not just be used to silence dissent but also to intervene in freedom of art and expression.

Metcalf loves her 'weirdo B storyline' on TV's 'The Conners'

This combination photo shows actress Laurie Metcalf at the 72nd annual Tony Awards in New York on June 10, 2018, left, Metcalf at the 70th Primetime Emmy Awards in Los Angeles on Sept. 17, 2018, and at the Oscars in Los Angeles on March 4, 2018. AP

NEW YORK (AP)—Laurie Metcalf smiles and laughs when she thinks of her character Jackie and her assorted misadventures on the "Roseanne" spinoff, "The Conners."

Dating back to her introduction in Roseanne Barr's 1988's sitcom, Jackie has reinvented herself many times over. She's been a cop, a truck driver, a factory worker, co-owner of The Lanford Lunch Box (which was reopened on "The Conners), and was for a time, as the character describes it, "Lanford's leading life coach."

The role earned Metcalf three Emmy Awards while "Roseanne" was on the air, but she's content with Jackie being a supporting role.

"A little bit of Jackie goes a long way, so I'm always the weirdo B storyline. Too much of Jackie would be just overdose."

While the character's overall persona has remained unchanged through both series, it's provided a chance to grow as an actor. When "Roseanne" started, Metcalf was a theater actor with no experience in television.

"Everything was new to me. I had a big learning curve to jump into a multi-camera sitcom. The writers started writing to each one of our different strengths," Metcalf recalled.

"I'm assuming that one of my strengths was to be this victimized loser who didn't have a clue that's what she was to begin with," she said laughing. "But (Jackie) just went out every day with her head up and determined to do something great or make something. And then it would all come collapsing down around her. But, she had definite, firm opinions about things. And she still to this day meddles in the rest of the family's business, even though her own life is collapsing around her."

That sometimes involves Jackie's romantic interests, which have been played by actors including George Clooney, Jim Varney and Matthew Broderick. She also dabbled in a throuple but that was short-lived because Metcalf says, "Jackie was clueless." Her current love interest is Neville, portrayed by Nat Faxon.

"It's so funny now when we go to work because we're wearing masks all through the week and we don't see each other until they say, 'Action.' We drop our mask and we tape the scene and then we put them right back on again. So. I didn't know what Nat even looked like for the first episode we did together until they said, 'Action' and then I saw his whole face."

Filming has wrapped on "The Conners" season three and the cast is waiting to see if they'll be renewed by ABC for a fourth season. Metcalf said there's more to be seen from Jackie, including whether she has any actual life coaching experience.

News Corp. buys Houghton Mifflin Harcourt books division

NEW YORK (AP)—In the latest news of consolidation in the literary world, Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. announced Monday it's buying Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's book-publishing division, which includes such blockbuster releases as J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy and George Orwell's "1984."

News Corp. owns HarperCollins, one of the industry's largest book publishers, which will operate the division, called HMH Books & Media, the company said Monday. The announced purchase price was $349 million.

"Timeless writing is a timely source of revenue and the potential to create highly profitable audio and video works flourishes with each passing digital day," News Corp. CEO Robert Thomson said in a statement. "The HarperCollins collection will be bolstered for children and young adults, and authors around the world will have a larger platform for their creativity and ingenuity. It is crucial to expand in an era in which emerging monopolies threaten the creative marketplace, so we welcome J.R.R. Tolkien, Virginia Woolf, George Orwell and many, many other distinguished writers to HarperCollins."

Wife is unsettled by man's obsession with amputation

DEAR ABBY
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married for six mostly blissful years, but recently, some of his fantasies have started to worry me. About six months ago, he told me he had an attraction to women with amputations. Naturally, I was confused. I didn't even know that was a "thing," but I accepted it, even though I thought it was odd.

Three months ago, he asked to do some role playing, where we hid my leg under a towel to give the appearance of having a below-the-knee amputation, which he says is his favorite. I didn't like it, but I went ahead with it. But now things are getting to be too much for me. He recently told me that not only does he find amputees attractive, but he wants to be one. What do I do?

IN WEIRD TERRITORY

DEAR I.W.T.: The name for your husband's fetish is body integrity identity disorder. It is important that you learn more about it, and I am recommending you do some research on the subject. You will find the information on the internet. You should also consult a licensed psychotherapist to help you decide whether this fetish is something you are prepared to live with or it's time to end your marriage.

DEAR ABBY: How can I explain that I'd like to try traveling solo (or worse, with someone else) to my overly sensitive sister-in-law? We have known each other for many years. I am divorced, and she's widowed. We have been on a handful of trips together in recent years, and after every one of them, I said to myself, "Never again!" She can be extremely annoying.

She talks ALL THE TIME and complains nonstop. Her feelings are easily hurt, and she's the least self-aware person I know. I have traveled with friends without any issues. I asked a couple of them about this, but got no answers. She already asked (last year/pre-pandemic), "Where will we go next?" Help!

BOTHERED BEYOND BELIEF

DEAR B.B.B.: Do not raise the subject of travel with her. Make plans with someone with whom you would like to enjoy the experience and, when your SIL asks, respond honestly. Tell her—as gently as you can—that it's not going to happen because the last times you traveled together she complained nonstop and spoiled the trip for you. If she has amnesia, give her chapter and verse. Will she like hearing it? No. Will it solve your problem? Absolutely—IF you can summon the courage to set yourself free.

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I and four friends were waiting to be served at a restaurant. All four of them began staring at their cellphones. Because I am not a cellphone owner and I spotted a magazine on a nearby table, I picked it up and started reading it. When we got home, my wife said she had been ashamed of my rudeness. Do you think I was rude?

TIT FOR TAT IN TEXAS

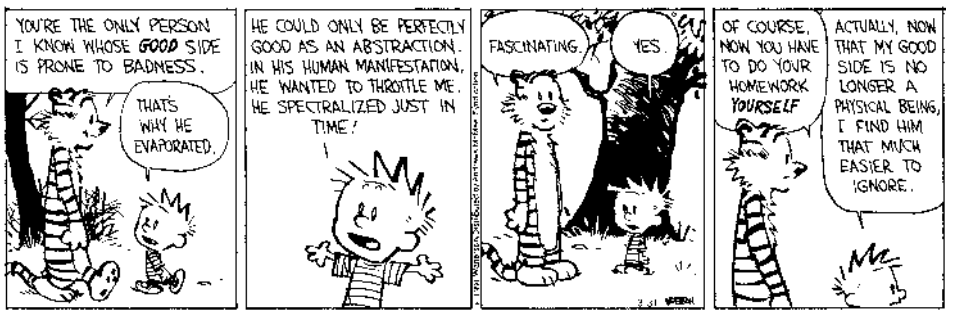
DEAR T.F.T.: Under the circumstances, no, I do not think you were rude. In light of the fact that the others were staring at their cellphones, you should have pleaded self-defense and been found not guilty.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


YOU'RE THE ONLY PERSON I KNOW WHOSE GOOD SIDE IS PRONE TO BADNESS.
THAT'S WHY HE EVAPORATED.
HE COULD ONLY BE PERFECTLY GOOD AS AN ABSTRACTION. IN HIS HUMAN MANIFESTATION, HE WANTED TO THROTTLE ME. HE SPECTRALIZED JUST IN TIME!
FASCINATING.
YES.
OF COURSE, NOW YOU HAVE TO DO YOUR HOMEWORK YOURSELF
ACTUALLY, NOW THAT MY GOOD SIDE IS NO LONGER A PHYSICAL BEING, I FIND HIM THAT MUCH EASIER TO IGNORE.

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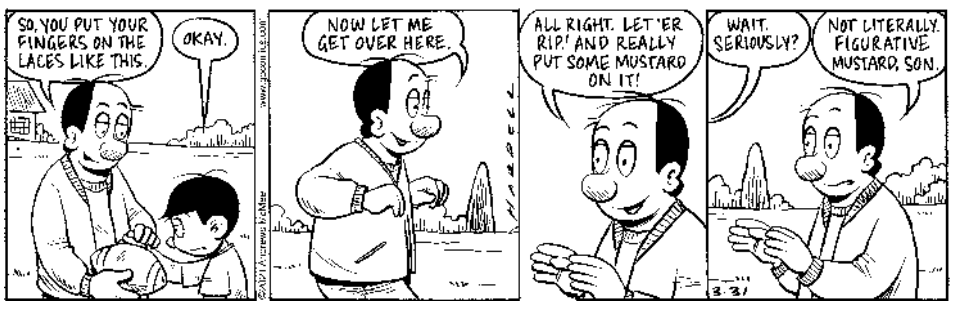
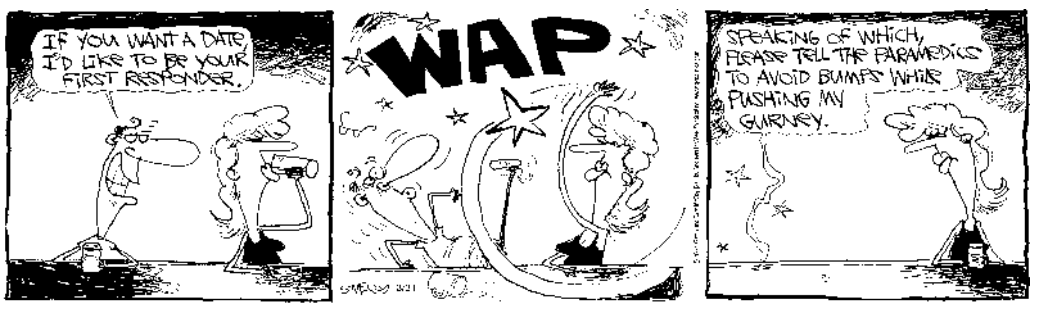
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


SO, YOU PUT YOUR FINGERS ON THE LACES LIKE THIS.
OKAY.
NOW LET ME GET OVER HERE.
ALL RIGHT. LET 'ER RIP! AND REALLY PUT SOME MUSTARD ON IT!
WAIT. SERIOUSLY?
NOT LITERALLY. FIGURATIVE MUSTARD, SON.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


IF YOU WANT A DATE, I'D LIKE TO BE YOUR FIRST RESPONDER.
WAP
SPEAKING OF WHICH, PLEASE TELL THE PARAMEDICS TO AVOID BUMPS WHILE PUSHING MY GURNEY.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Wager
4 Goals
8 Panorama
12 Egg (Pref.)
13 March Madness gp.
14 Old U.S. gas brand
15 Carnival city
16 Comedian who starred in and directed "Top Five"
18 God, in Islam
20 German article
21 Sweet wine
24 Fragrant wood
28 3, to 27
32 Without help
33 Candle count
34 Lieu
36 Weir
37 Bridge coup
39 Driver's news source
41 Try to swat
43 Low digits
44 Wee dollop
46 Curly-tailed dog
50 Lipstick shade
55 Existed
56 Bigfoot's cousin
57 Green land
58 Online chats, briefly
59 Monopoly card
60 Large amount
61 Badminton barrier

DOWN

1 Tora —, Afghanistan
2 Satan's forte
3 Implement
4 News show VIPs
5 German pronoun
6 Blemish
7 Uttered
8 Poem parts
9 Equi-
10 Computer key
11 Stir-fry pan
17 Pouch
19 Mimic
22 Campus mil. group
23 Have a bite —
25 Former Connecticut senator
26 Jai —
27 QB Tony
28 Moolah
29 Wrinkled fruit
30 Exhausted
31 Poi base
35 Greatly feared
38 Capital of Spain
40 Request
42 Sailor
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49 Admin. aide
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53 Rock's Ocasek
54 Mound stat

Solution time: 23 mins.

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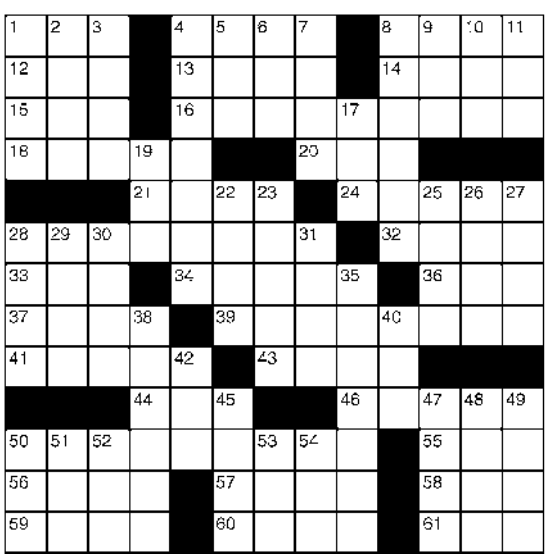
Yesterday's answer 3-31



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jessica Szohr, 36; Ewan McGregor, 50; Christopher Walken, 78; Shirley Jones, 87.

Happy Birthday: Strategize, think matters through and refuse to let others interfere. It's up to you to make decisions that suit your needs and to be the one who represents who you are, what you want and how you are going to reach your goals. Take control, and you will find the path that leads to contentment. Stabilize your life physically, financially and emotionally. Your numbers are 8, 12, 23, 25, 32, 37, 41.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Take care of legal, financial and health matters. Obsessing over something you cannot change won't help you forward. Assess your position and do whats needed to release yourself from negativity. Embrace the future with optimism. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Dig into your psyche, and you'll discover something meaningful. Change may not be necessary, but the way you use your time and structure your interactions with others will help you achieve peace of mind and a positive attitude. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Evaluate what you can do to help a situation. Don't be gullible; verify the facts and offer only what's necessary. Use any opportunity that comes along to advance. Start a dialogue with someone in an influential position, and you will excel. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Do something constructive. A creative project or time spent with people who offer mental stimulation will trigger an idea that will compensate for some of the uncertainties you face. Focus on fitness and taking an energetic approach to life, love and happiness. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Plan every move you make. Spontaneity will have its limitations. It's best to prepare for whatever you set out to do if you want to make sure everything runs smoothly. Embracing personal growth will pay off when dealing with relationships. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* An unexpected change will turn out better than anticipated. Spend time with someone who encourages you to be yourself and to follow your dream. Push negativity away, and go with the flow. Information a friend or relative offers dismisses uncertainty and stress. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Don't overspend or make unrealistic promises. Put your heart into something that will expand your mind or skills. Taking on a new challenge will open up a host of opportunities. The more you do, the more you will get in return. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Keep your life simple, moderate and within your budget. Focus on achievements and changes that will ensure you get to live life your way. Set goals. Plan rigorously to reach your destination in a limited amount of time. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Pay more attention to physical tasks and less to conversations with people who don't see things your way. Choose your battles wisely to avoid interference and an inability to get things done. Say less and do more. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Dig in and get things done. Taking charge will put you in the spotlight and help you get ahead. A change you make at home will encourage you to strive for perfection. Avoid situations that are questionable or lavish. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Uncertainty will set in if you are subject to someone indecisive or emotionally unstable. Concentrate on the things you can achieve if you take physical action. Move furniture around at home to enable the highest level of productivity. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Explore your options, and you'll find a good investment. Refuse to let anyone push you in a direction you don't want to go. Do what works best for you, and you'll encounter people who share your sentiments. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are wise, flexible and generous. You are curious and demonstrative.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	3	8	7					
4				2		5	7	
2			1		4			
3		2		1	5			
	5		6	8		3		
		6	3		7	1		
	2			7	3		6	1
	8					2	5	
						9		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/31

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

9	6	1	7	5	3	2	4	8
7	4	8	6	2	9	1	3	5
5	3	2	1	8	4	7	6	9
2	9	4	8	3	1	5	7	6
6	5	3	4	7	2	9	8	1
1	8	7	5	9	6	4	2	3
4	2	5	9	6	8	3	1	7
8	1	9	3	4	7	6	5	2
3	7	6	2	1	5	8	9	4

Difficulty Level ★★

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

A KAISEKI EXPERIENCE — Solution: 12 letters

O	D	S	D	I	U	Q	S	C	C	S	H	O	E	S
S	T	E	C	I	L	S	N	A	A	I	Ⓑ	Ⓞ	Ⓦ	Ⓛ
N	H	S	R	A	C	A	J	K	M	E	D	A	A	S
O	S	I	U	E	P	E	I	E	N	I	E	I	L	O
I	E	S	I	K	M	Z	D	T	G	A	S	R	C	Y
T	A	M	I	Z	U	M	O	N	O	S	S	O	O	A
C	S	N	I	K	A	R	I	P	H	N	E	Y	H	K
E	O	F	E	H	C	K	I	S	A	A	R	R	O	I
F	N	A	T	N	C	E	A	K	N	S	T	S	L	M
N	A	T	A	E	M	A	O	N	O	M	E	G	A	O
O	L	E	T	F	X	Y	M	S	A	P	U	O	S	N
C	O	T	O	H	R	T	U	O	A	K	Y	O	T	O
N	O	O	D	L	E	S	U	T	R	K	A	N	J	I
L	U	F	T	R	A	M	D	R	O	U	E	C	I	R
C	O	U	N	T	E	R	E	T	E	I	M	A	M	U

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Acidic, Agemono, Alcohol, Artful, Bento, Bowl, Cake, Casual, Chef, Confection, Counter, Dessert, Diced, Gohan, Kanji, Kyoto, Meat, Miso, Mizumono, Muromachi, Napkin, Noodles, Otsukuri, Rice, Ryokan, Ryori, Sake, Sakizuke, Sansai, Seasonal, Shiizakana, Shoes, Simmered, Slice, Soup, Soya, Squids, Texture, Theme, Tofu, Tokyo, Umami, Yakimono, YLto

Yesterday's Answer: Series

Treasuries 22 through 43 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Heat snap 6-game losing streak with win over Knicks

NEW YORK (AP)—Jimmy Butler scored 27 points and the Miami Heat snapped a six-game losing streak with a 98-88 win over the New York Knicks on Monday night.

Bam Adebayo scored 20 points, Duncan Robinson added 20, and Tyler Herro finished with 18 as Miami improved to 23-24.

"It's a great feeling (to win after) anytime you drop any in a row, let alone six in a row," Robinson said. "We were struggling ,so it's certainly nice to just get this one."

Julius Randle led New York with 22 points. Derrick Rose scored 16 points and Immanuel Quickley added 12, both off the bench, as the Knicks had their three-game winning streak halted and slipped to 24-23.

"We'll bounce back," Randle said.

The franchises engaged in an epic rivalry beginning in 1995 and culminating in 2000. Over the course of 20 regular-season games and 24 playoff games in back-to-back-to-back-to-back seasons, those Heat and Knicks teams redefined tough, passionate, emotional, defensive-oriented, compelling basketball.

While it is to be determined whether the teams will compete in the meaningful games this season, the final regular-season matchup between New York and Miami began as a possession-by-possession contest.

New York led 43-36 at halftime thanks to a strong defensive performance in the opening quarters. The Knicks limited the Heat to 33.3% (14 for 42) shooting from the field, 21.1% (4 for 19) from long range and forced six turnovers.

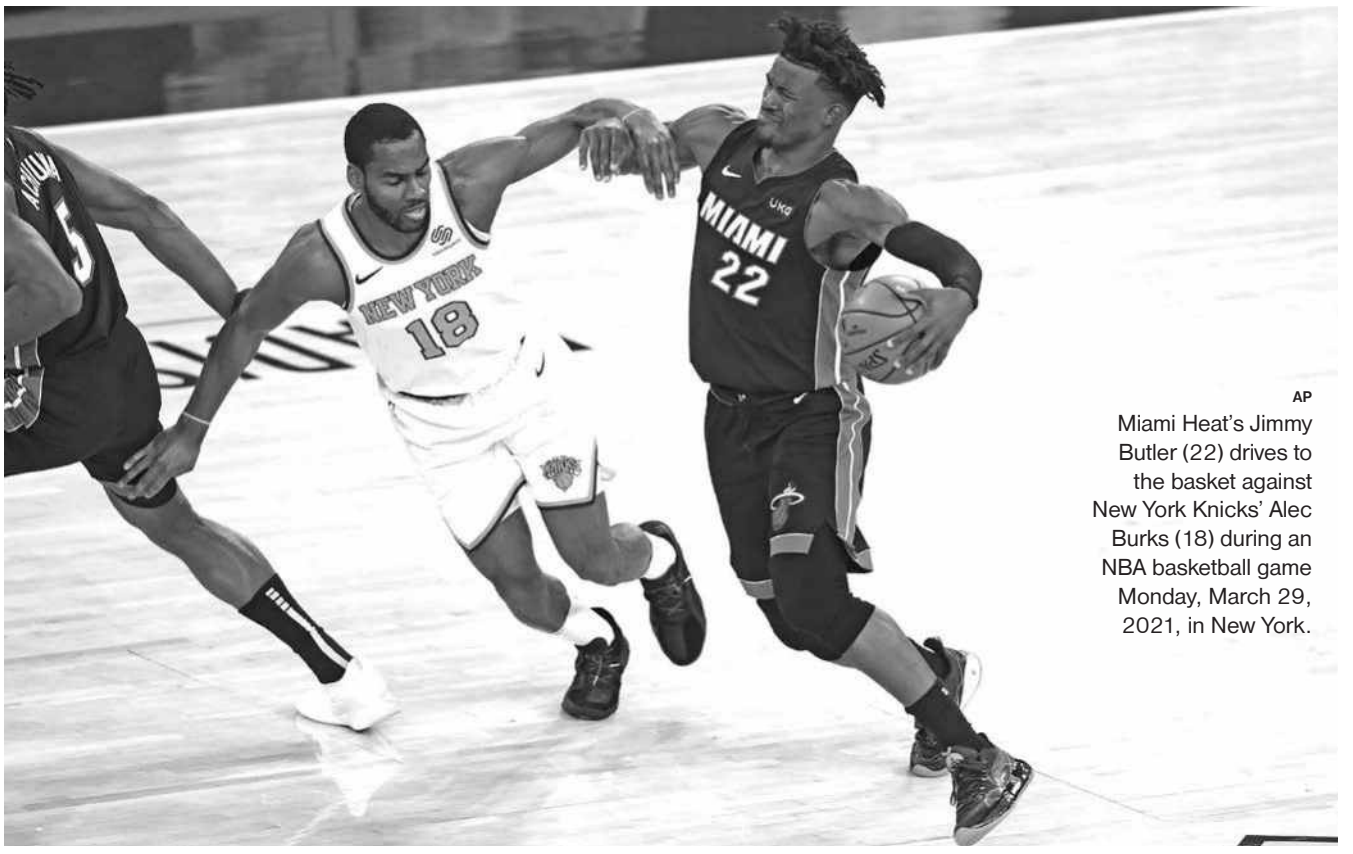
"It (was) like a playoff game environment," Knicks swingman RJ Barrett said. "That's what we're looking forward to, somewhere we want to get to. So it was good to have."

But the Knicks could not build on their advantage and trailed 75-64 entering the fourth quarter. Miami scored 39 points in the third, including 14 by Butler.

"As a young guy, it's amazing for me to watch," Herro said of Butler. "I think at any point throughout the game we all know he can turn it on."

New York outscored Miami 14-9 over the first 6:23 of the fourth, cutting the Heat's lead to 86-78. But Miami scored 12 of the final 22 points to seal the win.

Miami swept the regular-season series.



AP

Miami Heat's Jimmy Butler (22) drives to the basket against New York Knicks' Alec Burks (18) during an NBA basketball game Monday, March 29, 2021, in New York.

Mavericks 127, Thunder 106

In Oklahoma City, Luka Doncic scored 25 points to help the Dallas Mavericks roll past the Oklahoma City Thunder 127-106 on Monday night.

The Mavericks outscored the Thunder by 13 in the second half to pull away.

Kristaps Porzingis had 20 points and nine rebounds after missing the previous game with an injured right knee. He earned the team's defensive belt for helping to limit Oklahoma City's Moses Brown, a rising second-year player, to six points and nine rebounds.

Clippers 129, Bucks 105

In Los Angeles, Marcus Morris scored 25 points and three other starters had at least 20 points, helping the Los Angeles Clippers beat the Milwaukee Bucks 129-105 on Monday night for their sixth straight victory.

Kawhi Leonard added 23 points and nine rebounds, Luke Kennard had a season-high 21 points and Reggie Jackson added 20 points.

The Clippers made 19 3-pointers, one off their season high. They hit eight in the fourth, when they stretched a 13-point lead to 24 points. Kennard, starting in place of injured Paul George, made four 3s in a row while the Bucks managed just two points during a stretch midway through the quarter. Kennard finished with five 3s, tying his season high, and Jackson had four.

Wizards 132, Pacers 124

In Washington, Russell Westbrook had 35 points, a season-high 21 assists and 14 rebounds for his NBA-leading 16th triple-double, helping the Washington Wizards to a 132-124 win over the Indiana Pacers on Monday night.

Westbrook also claimed the franchise career triple-double record in just his 38th game with the Wizards, this one coming while teammate and NBA leading scorer Bradley Beal sat out with a bruised hip. Darrell Walker had 15 triple-doubles in 283 games for Washington between 1987-1991.

Rui Hachimura scored 26 points and Chandler Hutchison had 18 in his debut with the Wizards, who won their second straight after losing eight of nine.

Domantas Sabonis had 35 points and 11 rebounds for the Pacers, who lost for the second time in six games.

Nets 112, Timberwolves 107

In New York, James Harden had 38 points, 13 assists and 11 rebounds, tying the Nets' single-season record with his 12th triple-double in just 32 games, and Brooklyn held off the Minnesota Timberwolves 112-107 on Monday night.

Kyrie Irving added 27 points in his return after missing the three-game road trip last week for family reasons. He started fast, but Harden did the biggest work late, with 13 points in the final period.

The Nets won for the 18th time in 21 games, even as they continue a lengthy stretch without Kevin Durant because of a strained left hamstring. They don't yet have LaMarcus Aldridge, who signed Sunday but needs to get back in shape after being inactive the last month.

Grizzlies 120, Rockets 110

In Houston, Jonas Valanciunas scored a season-high 30 points, including eight down the stretch, to help the Memphis Grizzlies outlast the Houston Rockets 120-110 on Monday night.

It was a much different game than Houston's last meeting with Memphis, when the Grizzlies routed the Rockets 133-84, but the outcome was the same. Houston led by as many as 12 points in this one and was up by a point entering the fourth. But, the Rockets couldn't hold on late and lost for the third time in four games.

Valanciunas, who had 15 rebounds, made two consecutive baskets to extend the Memphis lead to 114-106 with two minutes to go. Danuel House Jr. made one of two free throws for Houston after that . Valanciunas then added another basket to extend the lead.

Warriors 116, Bulls 102

In San Francisco, Stephen Curry made a triumphant return from a five-game absence with a bruised tailbone to score 32 points with six 3-pointers, and the Golden State Warriors snapped a four-game losing streak by beating the Chicago Bulls 116-102 on Monday night.

Draymond Green contributed 11 points, nine assists and five rebounds as all five Golden State starters scored in double digits to keep the team from a season-worst fifth straight defeat. Rookie James Wiseman had four blocks.

Nikola Vucevic had 21 points, nine rebounds and six assists in his second game with Chicago since being traded from the Magic. But the Bulls lost their fourth straight and sixth in seven.

Jazz 114, Cavaliers 75

In Salt Lake City, Donovan Mitchell scored 19 points and Rudy Gobert added 18 points and 17 rebounds to power the Utah Jazz to their sixth straight win, a 114-75 victory over Cleveland on Monday night.

Mike Conley contributed 18 points for the Jazz, who have won 20 straight at home after dropping their first two home games of the season.

Since the All-Star game, Mitchell has averaged 29.2 points on 50% shooting and 46% from 3-point range. The Jazz only needed Mitchell for 25 minutes in the blowout.

Pistons 118, Raptors 104

In Detroit, Saben Lee scored 14 of his 19 points in the first half in his second career start, and the Detroit Pistons beat the Toronto Raptors 118-104 on Monday night.

Saddiq Bey, another Detroit rookie, also scored 19 points and Hamidou Diallo added 19 of his own. Fred VanVleet scored 22 for the Raptors, who lost for the 12th time in 13 games.

Lee was a second-round draft pick before this season, and the rebuilding Pistons have given plenty of opportunities to their young players recently. He went 6 of 7 from the field in the first half and eventually came within two points of matching his season high.

Kings 132, Spurs 115

In San Antonio, De'Aaron Fox scored 24 points, Richaun Holmes had 23 points and 12 rebounds, and the Sacramento Kings beat the San Antonio Spurs 132-115 on Monday night for their fifth straight victory.

Sacramento remains 11th in the Western Conference but is just outside the final play-in spot.

San Antonio point guard Dejounte Murray scored 23 points, but only had two points in the second half on four attempts. Derrick White added 19 points.

Pelicans 115, Celtics 109

In Boston, Zion Williamson scored 28 points and the New Orleans Pelicans held on after blowing most of a 17-point, fourth-quarter lead to beat Boston 115-109 on Monday night in the Celtics' first game in front of their home fans since before the pandemic.

Brandon Ingram had 25 points and nine assists, hitting a long 2-pointer with 34 seconds left after Boston scored 13 straight points to cut a 16-point deficit to 110-107. Jayson Tatum's layup rimmed out and the Celtics fouled Williamson; as he waited to shoot his free throws, Marcus Smart was given a technical foul and ejected.

NBA BRIEFS

NBA picks July 29 as date for this season's draft

NEW YORK (AP)—The NBA has scheduled this year's draft for July 29, though it has yet to announce the location for the event. Other key dates going into the draft were also revealed Monday: The draft combine is scheduled for June 21 through June 27, the draft lottery will be held June 22 and July 19 is the deadline for early-entry candidates to withdraw from the draft. Early-entry candidates must apply for the draft by May 30, the NBA said. The locations for the draft combine and lottery are also still undecided. In recent years prior to the pandemic, those events took place in Chicago and the lottery preceded a game in either the Eastern or Western conference finals. This season's NBA Finals, if they go the full seven games, are scheduled to end July 22.

Spurs add Dieng to front line after Aldridge departure

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—The San Antonio Spurs have signed center Gorgui Dieng, adding a nine-year veteran to the front line following the departure of LaMarcus Aldridge. The 6-10 Dieng was waived by Memphis last week after averaging 7.9 points, 4.5 rebounds and 1.3 assists over 22 games this season. Aldridge averaged 19.5 points and 8.0 rebounds in 5 1/2 seasons for the Spurs before they removed the 35-year-old from the rotation earlier this month while searching for a potential trade. The Spurs bought out Aldridge's contract and he said he plans to play for the Brooklyn Nets.

Baylor beats Arkansas for first Final Four in 71 years

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)— Baylor had been on the cusp of the Final Four twice before under coach Scott Drew, falling to the eventual champion both times.

These Bears have a different kind of swagger to them, a confidence with the skill to back it up.

Now their long Final Four wait is over.

Baylor is headed there for the first time in 71 years, getting 22 points from MaCio Teague and a dominating defensive performance from Davion Mitchell to beat Arkansas 81-72 on Monday night.

"Just pure joy, excitement," Drew said. "It was an emotional game, but seeing our guys have a chance to cut down the nets, it doesn't get much better than that."

The South Region final was a reunion of former Southwest Conference programs aiming to join another (Houston) in the Final Four.

The top-seeded Bears (26-2) appeared to be barreling toward ending their Final Four drought with a dominating start.

The Razorbacks (25-7), who know a bit about March comebacks, revved up the Mus Bus after some early sputtering, trimming an 18-point lead down to four.

Mitchell and Teague stiff-armed them from there.

Mitchell, back after early foul trouble, led the charge as Arkansas missed 12 straight shots. Teague hit the two biggest shots of the night, a pair of 3-pointers to put it out of reach.

Now it's on to the Final Four on Saturday against the Cougars in an all-Texas side of the bracket.

"What we did is history," Teague said. "I'm really happy for Coach Drew. He's spent a lot of time, dedication, blood, sweat and tears into this program."

Arkansas had rallied from double-digit deficits twice in the NCAA Tournament and appeared as if it would make it another after its early struggles.

The Razorbacks didn't have enough left against the high-octane Bears, coming up one game short of their first Final Four in 26 years

JD Notae and Davonte Davis had 14 apiece for Arkansas.

"The effort when we got down, we could have hung our heads, but we played really hard," Arkansas coach Eric Musselman said. "We played extremely hard, but lacked some scoring at times and defensively they hit some tough shots on us."

The expected fast-twitch South Region final was going to be a drought-ender, just a matter of how long.

The Razorbacks had not clawed this far down the bracket since playing in the 1995 national title game. Musselman has put them in hyper drive during his two seasons, conjuring up the kind of excitement not seen in Fayetteville since the Nolan Richardson "40 Minutes of Hell" days.

Baylor had been in this spot before under Drew, reaching the Elite Eight in 2010 and 2012. That left the Bears short of the Final Four dating back to when the bracket was only eight teams.

The Bears repeatedly beat the Razorbacks off the dribble to lead by 12 barely four minutes in, then on backdoor cuts to stretch it to 18.

"It just showed how focused and ready to play we were," Drew said. "We got good looks and the guys made them."

The Mus Bus, just like it had three times before in March, found the right gear to climb out of the hole.

Mitchell's third foul was the turning point.

When the head of Baylor's defensive snake went to the bench with about 8 minutes left, Arkansas took advantage by beating the Bears off the dribble and getting to the rim.

The Razorbacks hit 10 of 11 shots during one stretch to pull within 44-38 and were down just eight at halftime despite struggling for a long stretch. They kept Baylor within reach well into the second half before running out of steam.

"I'm not sure why it happens, but it's really hard to come back, especially from down 18," said Arkansas guard Jalen Tate. "I didn't even know we were down that much at one point in the game, but it just shows the resiliency of this group. We almost did it, just weren't able to tonight."

AP

Arkansas forward Justin Smith (0) passes between Baylor guard MaCio Teague (31) and guard Davion Mitchell (45) during the second half of an Elite 8 game in the NCAA men's college basketball tournament at Lucas Oil Stadium, Monday, March 29, 2021, in Indianapolis.

Houston 67, Oregon State 61

In Indianapolis, Kelvin Sampson stood atop a ladder and yanked loose the remnants of the net from the rim. He turned toward the red-clad Houston fans and started pumping his right fist, the net clutched in that hand the entire time.

Years of building a once-proud program back to prominence, of putting together a formula that was about way more than flashy offense — it all led to this breakthrough moment for Sampson and the Cougars.

Yes, Houston is going back to the Final Four for the first time since the famed "Phi Slama Jama" era after Monday night's 67-61 win against Oregon State.

"I always thought we could," Sampson said, "but we had to climb the ladder."

It was never supposed to be easy to get the second-seeded Cougars (28-3) back into the Final Four for the first time in 37 years, Sampson said. And his team proved him right, blowing a 17-point lead before preventing the 12th-seeded Beavers from adding one more surprising result to a Midwest Region bracket beset by upsets.

Quentin Grimes hit a 3-pointer with 3:21 left to break a 55-all tie, a shot from near the top of the arc that finally steadied the Cougars. And Houston knocked down enough free throws late while holding Oregon State without a basket during a critical 3 1/2 minutes.

That sent the Cougars on to the national semifinals to face Baylor.

Houston shot 29% after halftime and 32% for the game. Yet the performance exemplified the program's rugged defense-first identity, which had carried the Cougars as far as the Sweet 16 once before in Sampson's first six seasons.

"This is one of the greatest accomplishments I've been around," Sampson said. "And I have this group of players and this staff ... to thank for it. I'm glad they let me go along on the ride with them. It's been a fun ride with this group."

Marcus Sasser scored 20 points to lead Houston while Grimes added 18. Fittingly, it was DeJon Jarreau — the American Athletic Conference's defensive player of the year who led the effort that stymied Oregon State star Ethan Thompson — who was named the most outstanding player of the Midwest Region.

Jarreau finished with 10 points, eight rebounds and eight assists two days after flirting with another triple-double and shutting down Syracuse's Buddy Boeheim in the Sweet 16.

Maurice Calloo scored 13 points to lead Oregon State (20-13), which was vying to become the worst-seeded team ever to make a Final Four — and to extend a remarkable postseason run for a team that was picked to finish last in the Pac-12. The Beavers dug a 34-17 hole at halftime, then climbed all the way back only to see Grimes put the Cougars back in front.

"It was right there within our grasp with the effort we showed in the second half," Oregon State coach Wayne Tinkle said. "Really proud of this group. We got every single ounce out of them."

This will be Houston's first Final Four since Hakeem Olajuwon and coach Guy Lewis led the Cougars to the 1984 title game, in which they lost to Patrick Ewing and Georgetown. When this one was over, Houston's players sprinted to midcourt to celebrate, then migrated to the corner of the court near the Houston fan section and started jumping around — and on top of each other—in a celebratory mob.

Jarreau shared a long embrace with Sampson at midcourt.

"The story's still being written," Jarreau said. "And we're in the Final Four now."

What's ahead? NFL owners to meet about upcoming season

What's ahead for the NFL in 2021? Not even the teams know.

They'll begin finding out this week when the 32 team owners hold virtual meetings Tuesday and Wednesday.

Two items top the agenda: increasing the regular season to 17 games and decreasing preseason games to three per team. Both are nearly certain to be approved after a pandemic-stressed season that severely cut into the league's revenue stream.

Many players, however, aren't thrilled with the idea.

"We really let this happen," tweeted safety Adrian Amos of Green Bay.

Saints star running back Alvin Kamara called the increase to 17 games "dumb."

Regardless, it's about to happen. The owners want it and don't need the union's permission. The media partners who just spent about $10 billion annually for NFL rights fees will get more content that counts, and fewer exhibition games.

With the preseason reduced, plans basically call for a bye week after the final August games and before the season begins in the second week of September. Also coming is a reduction in such offseason events as minicamps, organized team activities and preseason work.

"There will be automatic changes to the offseason and in-season workout schedules as a result," said George Atallah, the NFL Players Association spokesman.

Just how expansive those changes will be is uncertain. By early April, clubs with new coaches — this year, the Jaguars, Texans, Jets, Chargers, Eagles, Lions, Falcons — normally are meeting with players before the entire league begins OTAs. All of that occurred remotely until training camp last year.

"I'm not that concerned about it, honestly," new Lions coach Dan Campbell said. "If there was a concern, it would be strength and conditioning, that part of it, and your guys working together a little bit. But if that's the case, you give them a plan and you keep tabs on them and make sure they're staying on top of what they need to do.

"But listen, we're not going to use that as an excuse for us. If we can't start until training camp, then you know what, we'll be ready to go and we'll hit the ground running and we'll get what we need to get out of it and adapt as fast as possible."

League and union research has revealed that the games with the most injuries are in the preseason. Dropping one exhibition, the NFL believes, removes the most vulnerable game for players and replaces it with a week of regular-season practices and a game.

The 17th game will be interconference, with specific divisions matching up first-place finishers in 2020 on down to fourth-place clubs. In 2022, the league hopes to add international games to that format.

Another major offshoot of playing 17 games will be moving the Super Bowl back one week, in this case from Feb. 6 in Los Angeles to Feb. 13. That would place the title game in the middle of the Winter Olympics in Beijing. Coincidentally—or maybe not to the network—NBC has both.

There will be no discussions on rules changes at these meetings. Those will occur in mid-April, when the competition committee presents any recommendations. ***(AP)***

Docomo Pacific reaffirms commitment to Paire FC

Docomo Pacific, regional leader in innovation, telecommunications, and entertainment, reaffirms its commitment to assist the Paire Football Club in the coming year.

"The Paire Football Club continues to have an impact on our youth by encouraging, advancing, and providing a safe and educational environment for the development of the sport. As strong believers in growing our community 'Better Together,' we are proud to stand by and use this opportunity to encourage and promote better values in our youth that we believe will have a lasting impact in our community," Docomo Pacific said in a statement.

With this sponsorship, Docomo Pacific will aid in supporting the club's health and wellness mission by providing essential equipment (e.g. supplies and uniforms) and covering other training related expenses. "We believe that through the spirit of togetherness and being one with our community, our youth have the potential to grow stronger together, spreading acts of unity and inclusion."

Practice for Paire FC divisions U6 & U8 with coach Ivan Ilmov. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"Paire FC remains thankful to Docomo Pacific for its years of investment in youth development through the sport of soccer. This sponsorship reaffirms their slogan of 'Better Together' and Paire FC's slogan of 'Do it for the children,'" said Paire FC president and coach Patty Coleman.

Docomo Pacific is a wholly owned subsidiary of NTT Docomo, Japan's leading mobile operator. Headquartered in Tamuning, Guam, Docomo Pacific is the largest provider of personal, residential, enterprise connectivity, and entertainment services in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. Named Guam's most reliable network, based on GWS' 2019 OneScore ranking. Docomo Pacific is also the five-time winner of Pika's Best of Guam and four-time winner of Best of The Pacific. Docomo Pacific is dedicated to bringing you and your family closer to the things that matter most. Get to know more about what makes us "Better Together" at www.docomopacific.com. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A couple of smiling Paire FC players pose for the camera.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Paire FC players hold up signages explaining whey they've took up the sport.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	32	14	.696	—
Brooklyn	32	15	.681	½
Milwaukee	29	17	.630	3
Charlotte	23	22	.511	8½
New York	24	23	.511	8½
Atlanta	23	23	.500	9
Boston	23	24	.489	9½
Miami	23	24	.489	9½
Indiana	21	24	.467	10½
Chicago	19	26	.422	12½
Toronto	18	29	.383	14½
Washington	17	28	.378	14½
Cleveland	17	30	.362	15½
Orlando	15	31	.326	17
Detroit	13	33	.283	19

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Utah	35	11	.761	—
Phoenix	31	14	.689	3½
L.A. Clippers	32	16	.667	4
L.A. Lakers	30	17	.638	5½
Denver	28	18	.609	7
Portland	28	18	.609	7
Dallas	24	21	.533	10½
San Antonio	23	21	.523	11
Memphis	22	22	.500	12
Golden State	23	24	.489	12½
Sacramento	22	25	.468	13½
New Orleans	21	25	.457	14
Oklahoma City	19	27	.413	16
Houston	13	33	.283	22
Minnesota	11	36	.234	24½

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PADDLERS

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in the CNMI, not just for the Mini Games next year but for years to come," he said.

Andrew said NMNPSF appreciates the decision of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to appropriate funding to include *vaa* in the upcoming Mini Games and also looks forward to working with the Pacific Mini Games 2022 Organizing Committee committee in regards to preparation.

"The NMNPSF appreciated the decision of the governor to include vaa and looks forward to working with the Games committee and [Northern Marianas Sports Association] in making *vaa* a memorable experience for our local athletes, families, and the community as well as our visiting athletes next year. We thank the governor for this," he said.

In a previous interview with Marco Peter, Pacific Mini Games 2022 Organizing Committee chairman, he said the committee is excited about the inclusion because *vaa* is more than just a sport for Micronesia, it was once a way of life.

Peter said the inclusion is the CNMI's chance to highlight its culture in seafaring.

Currently, athletics, baseball, badminton, beach volleyball, golf, and triathlon are the six sports that will officially be played in the 2022 Pacific Mini Games.

With the governor's appropriation of an additional $1 million for the Mini Games, the organizing committee is working on including *vaa*, weightlifting, and tennis in the event's final lineup.

MLB to relax virus protocols when 85% on field vaccinated

NEW YORK (AP)—Card games, car pools and eating at restaurants may be back in the major leagues later this season. Trips to church and sponsor events may return, too.

Mask use would be dropped from dugouts and bullpens, and electronic tracing devices would be eliminated when 85% of major league players and primary field staff are vaccinated against the coronavirus. Communal clubhouse video would return before and after games. Pool tables would be restored, along with team saunas.

A three-page memorandum from Major League Baseball and the players' association sent to players and staff on Monday and obtained by The Associated Press also stated "all players and staff are strongly encouraged to receive one of the approved COVID-19 vaccines when eligible."

"For purposes of this memo, individuals are considered 'fully vaccinated' two weeks after receiving their second dose of a two-dose vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) or two weeks after their first dose of a single dose vaccine (Johnson & Johnson)," the memo stated.

WOMEN'S

From Page 20

as well this is something that in the FIFA level and the AFC level, not every member association is doing enough or giving equal support to our women's program and this is something I am proud of, the women's participation over the years," he said.

NMIFA vice president Vicky Izuka said NMIFA has come a long way in its 16 years of women's football but it still has a long way to go to continue to introduce more women to the sport. "But we are so proud of how far we've come in women's football development," she said.

In a statement from AFC president Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa, he said women's football in Asia has achieved incredible development over the past decade and the huge success could not be accomplished without the passion and hard work of women from difference parts of the continent.

"Coinciding with the International Women's Day, the AFC Women's Football Day underlines the AFC's commitment to recognize and honor the dedication of the women in the sport. The AFC calls on everyone to join hands and pay tribute to women for their significant contributions in promoting and developing our great game," he said.

During the celebration, NMIFA invited 20 distinguished female guests, all of whom hold positions of influence in the CNMI, to participate in basic soccer drills and a few exhibitions matches.

The guests include U.S. District Court for the NMI Magistrate Judge Heather Kennedy, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona, CNMI Reps. Laila Staffler (D-Saipan) and Denita Yangetemai (D-Saipan), Tanapag Middle School principal Hilda Rios, Koblerville Elementary School principal Naomi Nishimura, Gregorio T. Camacho principal Raena Camacho, Chacha Oceanview Middle School principal Martha Kintol, Saipan Southern High School counselor Ana Mendiola, 2020 Miss Northern Marianas Earth Maria Terlaje, 2021 First Runner-up Marianas Bernadette Horey, 2021 Miss Marianas Savannah Delos Santos, 2021 Miss Mariana People's Choice Toremy Diaz, D&Q's Marilyn Marron, TakeCare Saipan's Melani Santos, Evelyn Lopez of CTSI, TanHoldings representative Loyda Ito, Shirley Kim of Sun Palace Hotel, D&Q's Kaylani Shiro, and nurse Julie Hall.

MENESES

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Sabino earned a good lift for 70 kg and 75 kg and a no lift in the 80 kg.

In the clean and jerk, Sabino made a lift in the 85 kg and 90 kg before failing in the 95 kg. He totaled 165 kg for the entire tournament.

Aaron Pamintuan also topped the 89 kg class. In the snatch, Pamintuan had lifts in the 78 kg and 81 kg before failing in the 85 kg.

Pamintuan moved on to the clean and jerk where he successfully lifted 100 kg, 103 kg, and 105 kg to finish with a total of 186 kg.

KIMBERLY A . BAUTISTA

The winners of the 2021 Marianas Cup Weightlifting Tournament pose for a photo last Saturday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center last Saturday.

Heat snap 6-game losing streak with win over Knicks

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Sports

Baylor beats Arkansas for first Final Four in 71 years

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Meneses tops 73-kg division

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Joshua Meneses prevailed in the 73-kilogram weight class of the 2021 Marianas Cup Weightlifting Tournament held last Saturday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

Meneses topped his division with a total of 184 kg over Brandon N. Regis who finished with 160 kg.

In the snatch, Meneses had lifts of 73 kg and 76 kg before failing on his attempt at 80 kg. In the first two lifts, Meneses' facial expression reflected a bit of a struggle but he kept a sort of boyish grin in an attempt to show he had control of the weights. Even after failing in the 80-kg round, Meneses remained optimistic, flashing a smile at the crowd before taking his leave.

KIMBERLY A . BAUTISTA

Joshua Meneses topped the 73-kg class of the 2021 Marianas Cup Weightlifting Tournament held at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center last Saturday.

Later in the clean and jerk, Meneses came back with a sterner expression with his eyes fixated toward the judges. He had good lifts in the 105 kg and 108 kg before failing in the 111 kg.

Meneses' sole competitor for the class, Regis, eased through the snatch, making lifts in the 60 kg, 63 kg, and finally the 67 kg.

Regis came back for the clean and jerk where he prevailed in the 90 kg and the 93 kg before he broke in the 96 kg.

Meanwhile in the snatch of the 61 kg class, Alberto Roberto had good lifts in the 62 kg before failing at his first attempt at 65 kg. Roberto successfully made a lift in the third round in his second attempt at 65 kg.

For the clean and jerk, Roberto made lifts in the 70 kg and 75 kg to advance to the 80 kg. He completed the round with a total of 145 kg.

Also topping his weight class was Deion Sabino in the 81 kg class. During the snatch,

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Paddlers gear up for Mini Games

KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

The Northern Marianas National Paddle Sports Federation starts preparations for the 2022 Pacific Mini Games after the announcement of their inclusion last week.

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

With the recent inclusion of *vaa* or outrigger canoe in the upcoming 2022 Pacific Mini Games, the Northern Marianas National Paddle Sports Federation has started to engage in needed conversations in preparation for the event.

In a statement from NMNPSF president Justin Andrew, he said as much as the CNMI paddling federation is excited about their inclusion in the upcoming Mini Games, there is a lot of responsibility in not only fielding a team but also hosting the sport in the quadrennial event.

"It is exciting and all paddlers that I have spoken to are all excited about the inclusion of *vaa* in the sports lineup. The federation recognizes the massive work that needs to be done to make this happen, and thus, has begun communications and collaborations with regional and international canoe builders, our National Federation the International Vaa Federaton (IVF), and other local and regional key stakeholders in ensuring the successful hosting of *vaa* races in the games next year," he said.

However, aside from the great opportunity to feature vaa in the Mini Games, the inclusion is also an opportunity to build the sport up in the CNMI.

"Additionally, the NMNPSF is excited about the great opportunity presented now to build its outrigger canoe, paddle sports program

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Women's football in CNMI gains recognition

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

In observance of International Women's Month, Northern Mariana Islands Football Association president Jerry Tan applauded the continuing advancement of women's football in the CNMI during NMIFA's celebration of AFC Women's Football Day 2021 last Sunday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Kobleville.

During the ceremony, Tan said in the global arena, football is known to be a predominantly male sport. However, he is proud to say that that is not the case in the CNMI as NMIFA strives to give equal importance and support to its women's program.

"That's why it's not difficult for NMIFA to organize the annual Women's Football Day every March because we have a solid program behind it and this is something I am very proud of," he said.

Tan explained that he is proud of the eagerness and ongoing participation of women and girls in football.

"AFC is also very committed and proud of our program

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KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

The Northern Mariana Islands Football Association observed International Women's Month with its celebration Women's Football Day last Sunday.